2020

Freakish Taxonomies: How The American Freak Show And Its Literature Redefine The Archive

Megan E. Pillow
University of Kentucky, meg.pillow@gmail.com
Author ORCID Identifier:
https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2996-2871
Digital Object Identifier: https://doi.org/10.13023/etd.2020.255

STUDENT AGREEMENT:

I represent that my thesis or dissertation and abstract are my original work. Proper attribution has been given to all outside sources. I understand that I am solely responsible for obtaining any needed copyright permissions. I have obtained needed written permission statement(s) from the owner(s) of each third-party copyrighted matter to be included in my work, allowing electronic distribution (if such use is not permitted by the fair use doctrine) which will be submitted to UKnowledge as Additional File.

I hereby grant to The University of Kentucky and its agents the irrevocable, non-exclusive, and royalty-free license to archive and make accessible my work in whole or in part in all forms of media, now or hereafter known. I agree that the document mentioned above may be made available immediately for worldwide access unless an embargo applies.

I retain all other ownership rights to the copyright of my work. I also retain the right to use in future works (such as articles or books) all or part of my work. I understand that I am free to register the copyright to my work.

REVIEW, APPROVAL AND ACCEPTANCE

The document mentioned above has been reviewed and accepted by the student's advisor, on behalf of the advisory committee, and by the Director of Graduate Studies (DGS), on behalf of the program; we verify that this is the final, approved version of the student's thesis including all changes required by the advisory committee. The undersigned agree to abide by the statements above.

Megan E. Pillow, Student

Dr. Marion Rust, Major Professor

Dr. Michael Trask, Director of Graduate Studies

FREAKISH TAXONOMIES: HOW THE AMERICAN FREAK SHOW AND ITS LITERATURE REDEFINE THE ARCHIVE

DISSERTATION

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the
College of Arts and Sciences
at the University of Kentucky

By
Megan E. Pillow
Lexington, Kentucky
Director: Dr. Marion Rust, Professor of English
Lexington, Kentucky
2020

https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2996-2871

ABSTRACT OF DISSERTATION

FREAKISH TAXONOMIES: HOW THE AMERICAN FREAK SHOW AND ITS LITERATURE REDEFINE THE ARCHIVE

The American freak show, which dominated the entertainment landscape from 1840 to 1940, is considered by some disability studies scholars to be off limits for critical engagement. In *Freakish Taxonomies: How the American Freak Show and its Literature Redefine the Archive,* I argue that by casting the freak show solely as an exploitative institution, we overlook its capacity to serve as a model for reinterpreting the relationship between literary studies and the archive. By recognizing the freak show not just as an exploitative institution but also as a dynamic archive of marginalized lives—one that utilizes an imperfect, often deceptive taxonomy that makes its flaws wholly visible rather than hiding them—we can explore the freak show's ability to serve as an analytical model for literary studies. In my study, I argue that the freak show and its promotional texts and tools function as a model for close reading not the order, but the gaps and flaws—what I call "freakish taxonomies" —in literature produced during the freak show's heyday. By applying this model of analysis to texts such as *Moby-Dick, The Country of the Pointed Firs*, *Puddn'head Wilson and Those Extraordinary Twins*, *Of One Blood*, and *Quicksand*, many of which have been classified as failed or flawed by critics, I argue that we can better identify the complex stories of marginalized lives that have sometimes been overlooked in these texts while simultaneously challenging disability studies' critical contention that novels are "part of a project of middle class hegemony" (Davis 41). As a result of this process of close reading and narrative identification, we can also redefine our understanding of the archive by moving away from the repository model and towards a "liberatory" archive which is more inclusive of the histories of marginalized populations and aligns with the more holistic turns of disability studies and archival studies.

KEYWORDS: American Literature, Nineteenth-century literature, Twentieth-century literature, Disability studies, Archival studies

Megan E. Pillow
(Name of Student)

May 8, 2020
Date

FREAKISH TAXONOMIES: HOW THE AMERICAN FREAK SHOW AND ITS LITERATURE REDEFINE THE ARCHIVE

By
Megan E. Pillow

Dr. Marion Rust

Director of Dissertation

Dr. Michael Trask

Director of Graduate Studies

05/08/2020

Date

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The following dissertation, while an individual work, benefited from the insights and direction of quite a few people, first and foremost, my dissertation committee. My dissertation chair, Dr. Marion Rust, challenged me at every stage of this project and approached my work with the kind of rigor, compassion, and joy that I did not think possible and that I feel privileged to benefit from. Her insights, her patience, and her belief in me were instrumental in helping me finish this project. I could not have done this without her, and I can only hope someday to be the kind of scholar and person that she is. Frank X Walker was my very first writing teacher and mentor, and I have returned to the lessons he taught me time and again over the years for inspiration and to tackle my most difficult writing challenges. This dissertation was the hardest challenge I have faced yet, and I would not have made it to the end of this project without his insights and his support. Dr. Michelle Sizemore taught me more about the structure of academic argument in a single course than I learned in all of graduate school. She was always kind and always thoughtful, and her comments and evaluation at every stage of the dissertation process gave me a global understanding of the strengths and challenges in my larger argument that I would otherwise not have had. I cannot thank Dr. Sizemore enough for her wisdom and her guidance. I first met Dr. Carol Mason in a feminist theory class my second year of graduate school, where she told our class that one of the animating principles for her scholarly researching was getting angry enough to ask “what the fuck?” and then searching for the answer. I knew immediately that I wanted her on my committee, and I’ve used that same approach, as well as Dr. Mason’s incisive feedback, which always seemed to see

where I was headed with my argument, even when I wasn't sure myself. I'm also grateful for the assistance of Dr. Michael Trask and Dr. Brenda Brueggemann, two professors who served on my committee through my prospectus stage, and grateful for the dedication of time and energy from Dr. Mónica Díaz, who kindly agreed to be the outside examiner for my doctoral defense. Finally, thanks to my departmental colleague Leslie R. Malland, who so kindly formatted my dissertation to Graduate School specifications.

I am deeply grateful to the University of Kentucky English Department and especially to the Graduate Committee for providing me with a Dissertation Semester Fellowship, which gave me much-needed time to work on this project without teaching responsibilities, and a Summer Research Fellowship, which allowed me to write, research, and travel to the New Bedford Whaling Museum during the summer of 2016. I also owe a thank you to librarians Kyle R. Triplett at the Brooke Russell Astor Reading Room at the New York Public Library and Mark D. Procknik at the Grimshaw-Gudewicz Reading Room at the New Bedford Whaling Museum. Both men assisted me in finding materials related to P.T. Barnum and the nineteenth century whaling industry that provided a great deal of context for this project, and I am deeply grateful for their assistance and their patience with me at every turn.

In addition to the technical and instrumental assistance above, I received equally important assistance from family and friends. Kathy Barbour, Dee Goertz, and Melissa Eden, all professors at my alma mater Hanover College and all dear friends of my heart, wrote letters of recommendation for grad school, invited me to campus to teach in their classes and feed me lunch, and offered consistent, loving support through every year of this program, and I am so grateful for them. My ex-husband Jonathan Davis provided

financial support for the first few years of my doctoral program, and I am grateful for that help and for the help of the Davis family as well. Deirdre Mikolajcik, Valerie Stevens, and Ben Wilson were all supportive during a very difficult period at the end of the dissertation writing process. Robin LaMer Rahija and Kristen Pickett were always available for questions, were always unfailing kind, and they solved so many problems for me during my time at UK that I know I wouldn't have completed the program without their friendship and their mountains of administrative support. Rebecca Wiltberger, Noor Al-Attar, Sarah Landes, Jaqueline Hersh, Carrie Bohnert, Ashley Taylor, Jeorg Sauer, Kadee Whaley, Ellen Elkins Graff, Margaret Frymire Kelly, Allie Marini, Katie Smith, Melissa Ragsly, Kamil Ahsan, and James Yates were great friends to laugh and cry with during this process, and their kindness and generosity as I agonized over my work and the upheavals of my life is something I'm forever indebted to. I'm also grateful to my father, Stephen Pillow, and my aunt, Mary Love, for their love and support, as well as to my sister, Amelia Pillow, for lending a hand when I needed it and for giving me a place to land as I navigated a divorce in the final year of this project.

I am eternally grateful as well for the presence of my children, Atticus and Silas, in my life during this process. I started this program when Atticus was one year old; I'm finally finishing it now with a seven-year-old and a five-year-old. These two made this the most arduous, the most beautiful, the most wrenching, the most wondrous seven years of my life, and their influence is in every single word of this project. Finally, I could not have completed a single day of this program without the love and support of my mother, Martha Bettis Gee, and my stepfather, Bill Gee. These two gave every ounce of themselves to help when I had a newborn and a toddler in my qualifying exam year,

stayed home with sick little ones when I had to be on campus, and were always the first to offer assistance in every emergency and every time I was exhausted and desperate for a break. They gave up their retirement peace and quiet and shelved vacations and other projects so that they could help me achieve this lifetime goal. My mother has also read every word of this dissertation and offered invaluable feedback and advice. This degree will be as much theirs as mine.

Finally, I could not have done this without Joaquin Fernandez, who is the biggest champion of my work, my very best reader, and the person who has made my life better every single day since he entered it. When he heard that my childcare had evaporated because of COVID-19 and that my kids were out of school during the most critical window of time before my defense, he dropped everything, hopped on a plane, and flew across the country to help me. Since then, he has entertained kids for hours, transferred his formidable skills as a chef from his restaurant to my kitchen to cook a hundred incredible meals, listened to a thousand fears and worries, dried my tears, given countless hugs and backrubs, and quietly put dozens of late-night cups of tea and hot chocolate and freshly-made pastries in front of me to fuel my work. I would not have been able to complete this dissertation without him, and I'm not sure how I can ever sufficiently give back to him what he has given me, but I'm sure going to try. To quote The Zombies, the warmth of your love is like the warmth of the sun, and no matter what the world looks like now, I really do believe that this will be our year. Wow, did it ever take a long time to come.

EPIGRAPH

Unluckily, a good part of the world falls through the narrative sieve, washing through the fingers of the recorders' hands and becoming lost. It is this simultaneous abundance and loss that I want to think about: how, while the narrative cupboard is bursting, the reader is often left fed, but still hungry. There is so much that lies outside of reach, so much that touches only tangentially on our lives, or confronts us with incomprehensible images.

- Carol Shields, "Narrative Hunger and the Overflowing Cupboard," from *Carol Shields, Narrative Hunger, and the Possibilities of Fiction*

What is placed in or left out of the archive is a political act, dictated by the archivist and the political context in which she lives…Sometimes the proof is never committed to the archive—it is not considered important enough to record, or if it is, not important enough to preserve…The complete archive is mythological, possible only in theory…

- Carmen Maria Machado, *In the Dream House*

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgements iii

Epigraph……..……..……..

Introduction

The narrative that many of us have heard about the American freak show is this: a form of entertainment with ancient and transnational roots, it was, in the United States, institutionalized and monetized by Barnum, and it proved a popular form of cross-class entertainment during its heyday from 1840 to 1940. According to some members of the disability studies scholarly community, the freak show is and should continue to be a subject off-limits for critique. The reason, they argue, is because it paraded and profited from a host of people with both real and invented bodily and cognitive differences from a presumed national "norm," as well as from exoticized displays of race and ethnicity that engendered what Leslie Fiedler—one of the earliest scholars to turn a critical eye to the enterprise—calls an "aboriginal shudder" in its audience (17). Much of this argument originates in the work of David Mitchell and Sharon Snyder, who contended in a 2005 article that "(a)nalytical efforts to divest the freak show of its prurience construct their own equivalents of bally plank exhibition."

Scholars such as Robert Bogdan, however, have pointed out that there is ample evidence that the freak show offered both legitimate and profitable work opportunities and a supportive environment for a population of people who could not otherwise find either (viii). While it is inarguable that exploitation of the freak show's performers did occur, the experiences of performers within the freak show likely varied as widely as the performers themselves. Mitchell and Snyder's conclusions about the experiences of freak show performers also ignore the vast subversive structures that were created by participants in other similar capitalist enterprises that are often classified as exploitative, such as sex work and pornography. Sex-positive scholars, activists, and critics from

Annie Sprinkle to Patrick Califia to Lorelei Lee[i] have argued that while exploitation certainly does occur, there are also numerous instances when sex workers feel autonomy rather than coercion in their sexual engagements and also a plethora of pornography written by and about women, queer folks, and other historically marginalized [ii]groups that empowers its participants rather than merely taking advantage of them. As Ummni Khan notes, sex-positive feminism consistently "rummages through the muck of patriarchy to find props, words, costumes, and scripts that can be transformed into empowering, subversive, and pleasurable tools" (349). In addition, Mitchell and Snyder's conclusion about the freak show, which historically featured both able-bodied people in costumes and prosthetics, or "made freaks," and people with genuine disabilities, or "born freaks," (Bogdan 8) excludes the rising crescendo of scholarly voices—many of them disabled folks[iii] themselves—that demand discussions about rather than dictums on issues of disabled sovereignty. In addition to the rising recognition of the value of self-advocacy, discussions around whether or not disabled people can engage in resistance and issue consent are evolving, in great part because of the work of scholars and advocates who assert that the experiences and lives of disabled people offer valuable contributions to biodiversity and culture.[iv]

In my project, I argue first that casting the freak show institution into the category of "exploitation" alone is at best imprecise because it classifies P.T. Barnum's purpose in establishing the freak show—as a profit-producing, traveling entertainment mechanism designed to succeed at all costs where his American Museum failed—as synonymous with the reasons the freak show performers participated in the performance and with the freak show's ultimate function. While in some ways accurate, this broad assignation

ignores the autonomy and individuality of the experiences of the performers themselves and the ability of the institution to take on a life of its own and function other than its originator intended. More importantly, however, this initial argument roots the freak show in a larger concern. Calling the freak show "exploitative" creates a classification problem: a single, monolithic term is being using to describe the experiences of a diverse demographic and the function of an institution that had broader and farther-reaching implications.

Problems with classification are pervasive across a variety of disciplines: from library sciences to archival studies to literary studies to disability studies, scholars have for years noted complications ranging from imprecision to the dilution of nuance to the erasure of difference that results from grouping objects, texts, and experiences within monolithic categories. Melissa Adler notes in *Cruising the Library* that the application of the Library of Congress classification system differs from location to location and that the process of placing books next to one another constrains and binds them by relations of power (x). Oliver W. Holmes notes in the National Archives' "Archives and Records Management Resources" guide that when archivists receive material, it has often already been arranged by the person or family arranging its donation, and archivists must simply respect the system of classification already in place rather than reorganizing or reclassifying the material (para. 1, 2). Clayton Koelb notes in "Some Problems of Literary Taxonomy" that literary scholars and teachers seem to be "unable to function" without systems of classification and that some of the classification systems we use are so common that we rarely recognize them, such as departmental divisions, the nationality of authors, and the time periods within which we specialize (233). Rosemarie Garland

Thomson's *Extraordinary Bodies*, one of the foundational texts for disability studies, notes the expression of the cultural self that she calls "the normate," the privilege of ablebodiedness that does not exist without "being outlined by the deviant others whose marked bodies shore up the normate's boundaries" (8).

Many of these same scholars note that some of the primary reasons commonly utilized classification systems are problematic is because they are rooted in a culture frequently dominated by the priorities and concerns of whiteness and ablebodiedness and the transition from theory to application by human beings is always challenging. In library sciences, classifications can elide or obfuscate differences in favor of groupings that reinforce normativity. In archival studies, classifications center around features and characteristics that are most often connected to the histories of wealthy white people and are dictated by the often-untrained individuals who are the collection's provenance of origin rather than by the experts charged with their care. In literary studies, classifications can become so ingrained in discourse that they can be used as a shorthand for analysis and argument rather than the execution of it. In disability studies, classifications can water down vast subsets of difference in favor of an overall umbrella designation. Classification, then, has become as much a part of the cultural self as Rosemarie Garland Thomson's normate, and just as fraught. When theorized as one mode of knowledge-making within a discipline, it is valuable. But when those who utilize classification refuse to acknowledge its primary use by those in power who are privileged enough to preserve the documents and objects that are representative of their histories and is applied differently by a multitude of people within that discipline, it risks becoming a tool that

reinforces normativity rather than articulating difference. As a result, classification becomes ripe for revision.

In *Freakish Taxonomies: How the American Freak Show and its Literature Redefine the Archive,* I argue that by casting the freak show solely as an exploitative institution, we overlook its capacity to serve as an example of how we can reinterpret established taxonomies—those overarching systems of classification that establish the relationship between objects in a group—and among them literary taxonomies in particular, so that we utilize them with more precision and with more recognition of the diversity they encompass. Instead, I contend that the freak show, while often exploitative, also serves as a mobile, dynamic archive of marginalized lives and was one of the only institutions at the time that chronicled the shifting identities and personas of a diverse subset of nineteenth and early twentieth-century Americans who would otherwise have gone completely unrecorded in an era in which the American citizenry was being redefined by the emerging taxonomy of "normalcy"[v] and the only iterations of archive in existence in the United States were decentralized and focused on preserving the histories of white people.[vi] By recognizing the freak show not just as an exploitative institution but also as a dynamic archive of marginalized lives—one that utilizes an imperfect, often deceptive taxonomy that makes its flaws wholly visible rather than hiding them—we can recognize the freak show's ability to serve as an analytical model for literary studies. It functions as a close reading tool for how to read not the order, but the gaps and flaws, in texts produced during the freak show's heyday which is where I contend many of the most complex, comprehensive stories reside.

The roots of this reading process are in Michael Bérubé's *The Secret Life of Stories: From Don Quixote to Harry Potter, How Understanding Intellectual Disability Transforms the Way We Read*, which posits that intellectual disabilities can be found not just represented, but deployed as narrative strategies to read "vast domains of human thought, experience, and action" (2) in literature. While Bérubé's argument—that the deployment of intellectual disability in literature as a narrative strategy and specifically its impact on motive, time, and self-awareness can inform and highlight patterns of close reading—planted the seed of an idea for how disability presents as more than representation in literature, my study argues for something different. I use the process of close reading the gaps and flaws readily apparent in freak show-produced promotional materials—what I call here "freakish taxonomies"—and apply that close reading technique to literary texts produced during the freak show's heyday and which critics have often cast as flawed or failed. The freak show's gaps and flaws, or freakish taxonomies, that I have identified are patterns that I've seen evidenced in texts in the freak show archive and that I have aligned with commonly used literary classifications in order to challenge our use and understanding of those concepts. As a result of this practice of literary identification and analysis, which uses the freak show as a model for reading the gaps and flaws in literature to challenge our understanding of literary taxonomy and to identify stories of marginalized lives that are sometimes overlooked, this study challenges the critical contention in disability studies that novels are "part of a project of middle class hegemony" (Davis 41) and alters our understanding of how archive functions. I call this the process of recognizing the "liberatory archive" as opposed to a repository understanding of archive. While this recognition of liberatory

archive can provide illumination to the archives of marginalized populations, it also means reinterpreting the materials produced by institutions that have long been cast as the dominion of those in power and to reclaim those materials as part of the archive of marginalized populations.

My study's overall goal, then, is to illustrate how the model provided by freak show texts can be used as an assistive analytical tool for close reading literature, particularly literature that itself is considered flawed or to be a critical failure, for the purpose of helping us to better identify the archive of complex and often overlooked stories of marginalized lives both represented and deployed in literature. In other words, the freak show provides a methodology for literary studies to identify the liberatory archive already present in the body of American literature, especially that which was written between 1840 and 1940. But in order to better understand how the liberatory archive works and its significance as a theoretical foundation for my project, it's important first to understand how repository archive works first and to identify what many scholars see as its own weaknesses or challenges.

Our current understandings of repository archive often focus on taxonomies that seek out, as expected, modes of coherence in order to make sense of the materials therein. But what those systems often do not teach us how to deal with are the instances in which archival materials appear to be flawed or insufficient. More often than not, this is the case with materials produced by marginalized groups; because of enslavement, oppression, loss of or removal from homesites, the fracturing of families, and other instances of trauma and dislocation, marginalized groups cannot produce historical materials that are as seamlessly cohesive as those produced by colonizing or dominant groups. As a result,

those archives are often not as easily interpreted and are sometimes cast as incomplete. When researchers and archivists encounter the products of marginalized groups as well as the challenges often endemic to these materials, those traditional systems of classification frequently break down. Making sense of that material becomes either exceedingly difficult or impossible because the material does not easily align with the systems of classification produced by those in positions of power in America, and often by institutions themselves, and largely governed by the same.

A host of scholars in archival studies have proposed ways in which we can counter the rigidity of the archive and honor the histories and legacies of marginalized populations. Scholars such as Ricardo L. Punzalan and Michelle Caswell have outlined the archive's challenges and proposed the inclusion of more material from marginalized groups. Among other things, Punzalan and Caswell have suggested using alternate valuation systems for materials; shifting the focus on establishing provenance, or the process of assignation, from the responsibility of the person or agency of origin alone to the subjects of the materials; and creating broad-based community archives that form a web of materials and information rather than a centralized housing of them ("Critical Directions"). Scholars such as Lae'l Hughes-Watkins discuss the necessity of using a recognition of the archive's flaws to build what they call a "reparative archive" that helps to highlight the lives and experiences of marginalized populations, an idea that has gained considerable traction in archival studies (3).

However, while the idea of a "reparative" archive and the conception of repairing harm done is innately appealing, the word itself and its implications also facilitate an ableist approach to archival re-envisioning that is equally problematic – and equally

barrier-producing for members of marginal groups who are possessed of the kinds of intersectional identities that are particularly susceptible to being ignored by history. Hughes-Watkins herself notes that this root idea of "repair" is "to put into proper order something that is injured, damaged, or defective" (3)— all conceptions of embodiment and human experience that those who persist in studying the freak show and the overarching subfield of disability studies seek to dispel.

But Hughes-Watkins is far from the only scholar to argue for the archive and its renewal to be re-envisioned this way; the archive has long been described using the language of insufficiency. Randall C. Jimerson points out that archives writ large have often omitted the records of "voiceless populations" and that silence is often indicative of some "constitutive parts missing;"[vii] Carolyn Steedman notes in *Dust* that archives often include "fragmentary, incomplete material" (x); in "Historical Totality in the African American Archive," Lloyd Pratt suggests that totalizing views of history often assume a "broken or occluded" archive (59). These fractured, ailing conceptions of big-picture archive suggest some measure of unfitness, and they attempt to impose what Lennard J. Davis calls "the hegemony of normalcy" (*Enforcing Normalcy* 45) upon archive itself, insisting that the only way it can be seen as whole is by having its gaps filled, its absences prostheticized into some manner of acceptable deviance. By using ableist language to describe the archive as incomplete, these scholars unintentionally perpetuate the mistaken belief not only that wholeness is somehow a necessity for our purposes but also that wholeness of archive ever existed in the first place.

While attempts to build large-scale archives devoted to marginal populations are both necessary and admirable, my goals in this project are considerably more humble.

My aim is not to construct a reparative archive, but instead to recognize the archive that already exists, and to adopt a term that Hughes-Watkins uses in passing (and credits to digital archivist Jarrett M. Drake) to describe the larger purpose of what Hughes-Watkins calls archival reparation: the liberatory archive. This archival vision—not of reconstructing the archive, but of better identifying, understanding, and highlighting the present contributions of marginal populations to the existing archive—has the potential to be very powerful. The liberatory archive aligns the nature of archive—which is already concerned with the systems of organizations that occupy the mind—with the concerns of the body in order to form the kind of holistic archival process that is particularly important to disability studies scholars. Understanding the archive as dynamic rather than static and liberatory rather than as a bounded or confined helps us recognize that the archives of marginalized populations are not broken; they are, instead, sites of constant intellectual reinvention, as is the liberatory archive at large.

Reading the archive as an entity capable of both thought and feeling, an entity with an infinite capacity for change, an entity capable of encompassing the histories of a range of intersectional identities allows us to help to reclaim the archive as an intersectional space rather than one that simply preserves the histories of dominant cultures and people. The idea of liberation—seeking freedom for the archive from discriminatory social conventions and attitudes, to relieve it of an occupying force—opens a host of possibilities for further research both for archival studies and disability studies alike. This conception also gives the same space, voice, and visibility to the archival materials produced by marginalized populations to which those in power have long had unequivocal access.

Reading the archive for its gaps and flaws instead of for its order or consistency is also key to reclaiming the archive as an intersectional space. Those gaps and flaws become particularly important when applied to literary studies; so much of what we do in this discipline is an attempt to make sense of texts and to build argument through the lens of established literary taxonomy. We look for patterns; we attempt to make sense of texts by looking at their cultural, historical, temporal, and textual influences. The result, however, is often a system of study that slots texts into the literary archive. This process is, of course, to some extent unavoidable; classification and categorization are impossible to disrupt completely. But what I argue is that this dynamic process of reading gaps and flaws allows us to look at the parts of the texts that sometimes don't make sense, that are sometimes disregarded as failed experiments, and to see how they may be functioning to preserve the complex, diverse lives and histories that we sometimes overlook.

I have discussed extensively in this introduction my theoretical foundation for this project, as well as the overarching framework of my argument. I'd also like to discuss briefly how I use the freak show's gaps and flaws—which I call "freakish taxonomies" and in this reading are concepts of fluid provenance, narrative rupture, and radical quiet—in each chapter as a tool for literary analysis that reveals evidence of marginalized lives and experiences in each text and helps to recognize the liberatory archive. In order to illustrate how these freakish taxonomies function as assistive analytical tools for literary studies, I have identified these same patterns in literary texts and have used them to complicate and question our understandings of commonly-recognized literary classifications: fluid provenance is aligned with an interrogation of American regionalism, narrative rupture is aligned with an interrogation of frame narrative, and

radical quiet is aligned with an interrogation of interior monologue. In Chapter 2, I examine how the fluid provenance of the Fejee Mermaid provides a model for reading a fluid definition of region and regionalism in *Moby Dick* and *The Country of the Pointed Firs,* which reveals the archive of queer collective intimacy in both novels. In Chapter 3, I examine how the narrative rupture in the freak show ballyhoo provides a model for reading the ruptured frame narrative in *Puddn'head Wilson and Those Extraordinary Twins,* which reveals the archive of the legacy of slavery and the realities of disabled lives in both texts. In Chapter 4, I examine how, when read together, the radical quiet of The Circassian Girl and the tragic mulatta provide a model for reading interior monologue in *Quicksand* and *Of One Blood,* which reveals the archive of the lived experiences of biracial women in both texts.

In essence, then, this project aims to posit the freak show and the literature of the period as a model of the kind of liberatory, community-based archives that may be of interest to those in archival studies, disability studies, and any other discipline seeking to better recognize and understand the experiences of marginalized populations. It helps us to see archive not as a place to store objects and texts and narratives but instead as an intersectional and ongoing process of examination and identification that can help to establish the belonging and believing that Jarrett K. Drake asserts is crucial to a liberatory archive. Instead of forcing us to slot texts into the literary archive, the liberatory archive encourages us to see each text as archival space of its own: a space to examine a text's supposed gaps and flaws to see how they might complicate and even strengthen our understanding of it. The real liberation, the setting free of the literary archive, means we allow ourselves to read each text not to see how it fits into our understanding of literary

studies and slots into the archive; we read each text as an archive alone and as a space in which we challenge and change our understandings of literary taxonomy and recognize the experiences of marginalized lives that have always been present, although often overshadowed.

---

[i] Among many others, see Sprinkle's *Hardcore from the Heart: The Pleasures, Profits, and Politics of Sex in Performance,* Continuum (2001) in which Sprinkle reclaims her identity and agency as a "post-porn modernist"; Califia's *Macho Sluts: Erotic Fiction*, Alyson Books (1994) which uses a literary approach to blend erotica, porn, and BDSM as cultural commentary on the human condition; and "Cash/Consent: The War on Sex Work" *n+1*, Issue 35: Savior Complex, Fall 2019, a thoroughly-researched blend of research, memoir, and reportage by a sex worker about the gray areas between sex work and human trafficking that adeptly illustrates the profound inaccuracies in those binary categories.

[ii] Although *Unsettled States: Nineteenth Century American Literary Studies* was an oft-consulted text and I value its approach to centering "minoritarian," dominant power-disrupting literatures in the spirit of Deleuze and Guattari, I chose the term "marginalized" for this study because I observe that many of the identities I'm writing about here - queerness, disability, blackness, and biracial/multiracial identities - were treated as insignificant or peripheral during my period of study. I hope the use of the term reflects my study's goal of illuminating stories that were long present but sometimes overlooked and honors the reality of the treatment of these identity groups in situ during the nineteenth century even as I join in encouraging disciplinary shifts to a more minoritarian mindset.

[iii] As in many marginalized communities, there is an ongoing debate about whether to use identity-first (i.e. "disabled people") or people-first (i.e. "people with disabilities") language in. The consensus, notes Tara Haelle, is that there is no consensus because the disability community is so vast and so diverse, so it's best to ask people how they would like to be addressed. I use identity-first language for the purposes of my argument because part of my focus in this study is to highlight rather than obfuscate the identity categories under discussion. For more, see her blog post at the Association for Health Care Journalists Center for Excellence in Health Care Journalism. I chose a more public-facing source here because her post polled and archived a broad range of disability communities and their responses and because it highlights the propensity for rapid change in this discussion.

[iv] Again, among others, see *The Disability Studies Reader, Fourth Edition* (ed. Lennard J. Davis), particularly "The Unexceptional Schizophrenic: A Post-Postmodern Introduction" by Catherine Prendergast which argues the case for self-advocacy by schizophrenics and "Disability and the Theory of Complex Embodiment—For Identity Politics in a New Register" by Tobin Seiners, which contends that disability is a constantly-changing category and needs new paradigms to describe it; *Feminist, Queer, Crip* by Alison Kafer which examines the intersectional relationships between disability

and other social justice movements such as environmental justice, reproductive justice, and cyborg theory; *A Disability History of the United States* by Kim E. Nielsen which offers a comprehensive overview of the disabled American experience from indigenous America to present; and *The Secret Life of Stories: From Don Quixote to Harry Potter, How Understanding Intellectual Disability Transforms the Way We Read* by Michael Bérubé, which argues for a move beyond examining disabled representation in literature to the ways in which disability is used as an interrogative tool in the text and which is key to my argument.

[v] There are volumes of disability scholarship on the rise of the term and taxonomy "normal" in America and elsewhere, but key are these: Lennard J. Davis notes in the introduction to *The Disability Studies Reader* that "normal" came to mean "deviating from regular or usual" around 1840 and originated in the work of French statistician Adolphe Quetelet. Quetelet formulated the concept of the "average" man, which was then used by eugenicists such as Sir Francis Galton in combination with Darwin's theory of evolution to begin to identify and criminalize deviance from the "norm" (3-4). Kim Nielsen notes in her comprehensive *A Disability History of the United States* that in the years following the American Revolution, "the new nation sought to define and distinguish between good and bad citizens" (49) and "inherent to the creation of the United States was the legal and ideological delineation of those who embodied ableness and full citizenship, as apart from those whose bodies and minds were considered deficient and defective" (50). I talk more about this in detail in Chapter 3.

[vi] In *Archives Power*, Randall C. Jimerson notes that more than 100 historical societies were founded in the United States prior to the Civil War, but most of the material they preserved was from wealthy white families, most were concentrated in the north, and the system of historical societies were not centralized in any way (84). In fact, one of the key disjunctions in the United States was its dependence on reliable documentation but its refusal to value archival preservation (79); the country did not establish any centralized archival entity until the National Archives was built in 1933 (104).

[vii] Jimerson cites Haitian historian Michel-Ralph Trouillot to make his point: "silences are inherent in history because any single event, however defined, enters history with *some* of its constitutive parts missing," emphasis Jimerson's (299).

CHAPTER 2. "Let Us Squeeze Ourselves Universally": Fluid Provenance, the Reinterpretation of Regionalism, and the Archive of Queer Collective Intimacy in *Moby-Dick* and *The Country of the Pointed Firs*

Introduction

An advertisement that appeared on the interior pages of an 1843 edition of *The Charleston Mercury*[viii] newspaper likely caused little fuss among the populace who encountered it. Nestled between ads for land for sale, cooks for hire, and "Negroes wanted," a bold headline proclaimed GRAND EXHIBITION!!! *WONDERS OF NATURE!!!* Featuring a cartoon of a half-nude woman—a fish from the waist down who suggestively stroked her hair—the ad informed readers that the "wonder" would be featured at the Masonic Hall at the corner of King and Wentworth Streets in Charleston beginning that very weekend. The "wonder," stated the ad, was "that most wonderful object of creation the real 'MERMAID' taken near the Fejee Islands," which it claimed had already been displayed in New York, Boston, Baltimore and Washington. The mermaid, pronounced the ad, "has utterly dispelled the doubts of thousands and thousands of naturalists and other scientific persons regarding the real existence of such an animal!"[ix]

The "Fejee mermaid" advertisement is an example of rhetorical hyperbole and persuasion in print, a format used to entice visitors to attend the freak show. A single advertisement such as this one may have been seen by many eyes or just a few, depending on a paper's circulation.[x] This ad is an excellent text with which to begin my study because it was the kind of material routinely produced by the freak show, and the object it describes created a particularly heightened frenzy of interest and anger from

citizen and scientists alike[xi] that was representative of the diverse and divisive responses the freak show inspired.

Ads such as the one detailed here were, of course, one drop in the flood of advertisements, broadsides, booklets, and posters that spilled over into towns and cities across nineteenth and early twentieth-century America. These ads heralded the arrival of a single freak exhibition or a traveling freak show, which featured multiple performers or objects for exhibition.[xii] 1843 was just the beginning of this deluge; Barnum, who at the time capitalized heavily on freak show attractions in his brick-and-mortar American Museum, was starting to test the power of traveling exhibitions to battle local audience fatigue and to reach a wider audience. The Fejee mermaid ad affords a glimpse into what would evolve into a powerful publicity machine and illustrates the freak show's mobility, reach, and mass appeal. Because of the dearth of or improbability of electronic means of conveyance, that machine was operated by "publicity men" who plastered towns with promotional material before the arrival of the show itself (Bogdan 98). The material used the rhetoric of hyperbole and the specter of authority to cast freak show performers and the freak show's exhibition objects into one of two categories of freakishness: the *exotic*, which usually suggested that the performer or object was a visitor from a part of the world that wasn't well-known, or *aggrandized*, which awarded the performer or object special or unique characteristics. These texts and images were intended in part to lure in audiences and to bolster the aura of both mystery and reverence associated with the performers and objects.

The enmeshing of strangeness with exemplariness was a common freak show practice, but these descriptions also propelled performers and objects into roles that

privileged their promotion and display rather than the accuracy of their histories. In some cases, that is because freak show performers and objects represented oddities that were manufactured rather than real: the Fejee Mermaid referenced in the *Mercury* ad, for example, which P.T. Barnum leased from Moses Kimball of the Boston Museum for $12.50 a week (Bondeson 50), had its authenticity frequently and resoundingly disputed and was widely believed to be the torso of a monkey sewn onto the lower half of a fish. Freak show texts like the Fejee mermaid ad attempted to serve an additional function beyond manufacturing oddness and wonder. They used overzealous descriptions and attributions from unnamed or unverifiable scientific or medical experts to distract from the lack of evidence of authenticity. The Fejee mermaid ad, for example, claims to have "the real 'MERMAID' taken near the Fejee Islands" and tries to imbue it with validity by stating that the mermaid has "dispelled the doubts of thousands and thousands of naturalists and other scientific persons regarding the real existence of such an animal." Although Barnum built an impressive fiction for the Fejee mermaid behind the scenes, the only evidence that the ad provides that the mermaid is real comes from unnamed sources with no attributable scientific credentials. Likewise, the assertion that the mermaid was taken from "Fejee" is the only evidence given of the statement's veracity. As a result, the ad establishes what we can generously call a fluid sense of provenance, or origin, for the Fejee mermaid. Many who encountered the ad believed the mermaid was a wholesale fiction, but we do not know exactly where that fiction began. We can trace its supposed origins back decades before Barnum to Captain Samuel Barrett Eades, who had the mermaid for decades and who firmly believed it to be real, then to the Dutch merchants he purchased it from who also believed it authentic, who supposedly

purchased it from a Japanese fisherman who apparently didn't realize the value of what he had (Bondeson 38). Again, however, all we have is their stories and their word in lieu of verifiable evidence. Thus, the Fejee mermaid, was, and is, attributable to nothing but itself and the insular freak show community. It represents in small scale the freak show's larger fiction and equally fluid origins. By building its foundation on exhibitions of living people and material objects that blurred the lines between fiction and truth, the freak show found its point of origin as much in the cultural imagination of the nineteenth and early twentieth century United States as it did in Barnum's capitalistic impulses.

Reading the gaps and flaws in freak show-produced texts like the Fejee mermaid ad is a lesson in miniature for how we read the freak show as a whole. If we look at the way the Fejee mermaid ad was constructed, we can clearly see the rickety framework of the freak show itself. The ad's use of boldface type and italics, its excessive exclamatories, its attempts to bolster the credence and reputation of the attraction through generalizations, half-truths, exaggerations, and even outright lies, all act to enshrine Barnum's greed, the histories of Captain Eades and the Dutchmen, and the supposed ignorance of the Japanese fisherman while verifying none of them. In this text, we see the freak show laid bare: a fluid, flawed space that archived a host of hidden stories inside a system of language, codes, and customs designed to hide the truth. Because of the complexity of its machinations, its insularity, and its secrecy, driven as much by the greed of Barnum and other showmen as by the performer's desire to create a home for themselves in a world that often did not want them (Bogdan 81), the freak show archive also functioned simultaneously as a distinct American region, replete with both native

and naturalized populations, a unique landscape, a defined culture, and a colloquial language.

What makes the Fejee mermaid ad especially well-suited for analysis as part of my study and particularly for this study's second chapter is that it provides a tangible example of the freak show model at work. Identifying freak show exhibits like the Fejee mermaid that possess a fluid provenance or origin also increases the usefulness of these narratives as an assistive analytical tool for literary studies. The way in which we closely read the gaps and flaws in texts like the Fejee mermaid ad shows us how the gaps and flaws in a text can be just as enlightening as its strengths. We focus not on the direct arguments of which it attempts to convince us but on its obfuscations, on what it elides, on what it leaves unsaid or missing, on what it suggests rather than states outright. The ad showcases the freak show's fluid sense of provenance and illustrates one way in which the freak show and its texts model how to read the gaps and flaws in literature to find archival evidence of the lives of those on the margins.

The fluid provenance of the Fejee mermaid ad encouraged me to tackle two texts for this chapter whose literary origins I have long considered in dispute: *Moby-Dick* and *The Country of the Pointed Firs*. Using the Fejee mermaid ad as a model to read the gaps and flaws in these two wildly different novels whose roots in masculinity, whiteness, and ableism have long been subjects of critical friction, I apply the ad's fluid provenance to the text and use that new reading of origin to reinterpret how American regionalism manifests in the novels. As a result of this reading, I contend that *The Country of the Pointed Firs* and *Moby-Dick* should both be considered novels of American regionalism, but not because of their geographical depictions. When read together, the relationships,

characters, interactions and subtexts that bleed from Melville's depictions of life during the heyday of seafaring into Jewett's depictions of coastal life during seafaring's decline provide us with a more fluid, representative understanding of life in the age of seafaring. It is a life that is heavily populated with people manifesting all manners of queer difference: racial, ethnic, corporeal, and sexual, among others. Although sea life maintains itself as primarily a location of leisure and wealth in twenty-first century America, it was a critical feature of the nineteenth century American landscape and experience, one so critical that, like the freak show, I designate it as its very own American region: the "maritime" region. This iteration of regionalism does not displace those problematic roots of masculinity, whiteness, and ableism that remain features of dominant culture, but provides a more dynamic source of origin for these texts that bridges rather than entrenches binaries: land and sea, male and female, individual and group. This reinterpretation of regionalism brings to light a literary maritime region that functions as a mechanism of the liberatory archive in which stories of collective queer intimacy are stored and are a routine part of everyday life.

Regionalism and the "Maritime" Region

It is well-established that Jewett's text is a text of American regionalism, although it is often also called "local color writing." What's not necessarily clear is how Melville's text might fit this description. In order to understand this and to understand how we read regionalism in these two texts simultaneously, we must consider both to be texts that offer depictions of what I call the maritime region. In order to begin that discussion,

however, it's important to briefly examine how the maritime region fits into our established understanding of American regionalism.

Most scholars who work primarily with the literature produced during this movement agree that Richard Brodhead and Amy Kaplan offer two of the most blistering critiques of regionalism's function and influence. Although many critics have strong feelings about how regionalism operates, and while Brodhead and Kaplan do diverge, most suggest that Brodhead and Kaplan both "characterize regionalist literature as consolidating nationalist narratives." Coby Dowdell points out that Kaplan in particular considers the literature a mode written for urban elites to measure their development against rural communities (211). Similarly, Dowdell notes, Brodhead considers regionalist literature to be literature developed for urban tourists with "a cultural order that is disconnected from contemporary industrial society." The region "then becomes a self-contained unit" that is an idealized version of American society and, as Brodhead notes, particularly in the case of Jewett, a self-contained society for women. As Dowdell rightly points out, these categorizations tend to conflate local color with regionalism; however, as Dowdell states, local color tends to exclude regional voices from the telling of regional stories in lieu of a narrator who in essence tells the story for them (212). Dowdell then argues that true regional literature allows "the regional perspective to resonate alongside that of the urban narrator" (212).

I would also argue that American regionalism has a form and function that is slightly different than what Brodhead and Kaplan proclaim; indeed, I tend to align myself a bit more with Dowdell's camp. But I also find Douglas Reichert Powell's explanation of critical regionalism particularly useful here. Powell's focus is on the concept that "a

region is not a thing so much as a cultural history" (6); his interpretation of new regional scholarship is that scholars across the disciplines "have all called for and enacted scholarship on regional culture that approaches the idea of region as a rich, complicated, and dynamic cultural construct rather than a static, stable geophysical entity" (6). The emphasis, notes Powell, then becomes "not on what regions are but on why they are that way, on what they do as much as what has been done to them" (7).

I am drawn very strongly to Powell's approach, which reads across definitions of regionalism and looks for meanings in the gaps, in the flaws and complexities, rather than in the consistencies. For the purposes of this argument, then, I contend that an American regionalist text is a blend of Dowdell's and Powell's definitions: one that presents a construct—including the people, language, customs, symbols, interactions, and even some topographical elements—that appears at first to be self-contained. But rather than enshrining elitism or nationalist narratives, it helps us to interrogate our concept of national belonging and by engaging in that larger process of inquiry, it functions as a dynamic rather than bounded or static space. In addition, it tends to offer commentary from a narrator that is given not primacy over but parallel presentation with regional voices.

Next, I'd like to explain my rationale for why I believe that nineteenth century sea and shore function as this kind of American region, what I call the maritime region. While there is no consistent narrative that presents this argument, we can, as the Fejee mermaid ad illustrates, read the gaps in order to identify distinct characteristics that suggest that seafaring life fits that categorization. First, historic usages of the word "region" account for an interpretation that includes elements other than geographical; as

far back as 1386, the air and sky was considered to have regions, and by 1846, the sea was as well. Second, the "maritime region" of the nineteenth century possessed a significant population with a distinct, common lifestyle. As Pamela A. Miller points out, seafaring, particularly the whaling industry, was heavily populated during its heyday, which was between about 1820 and the beginning of the Civil War. During the course of American whaling, there were 13,927 whaling voyages (8). The peak was in 1846, just a few years before *Moby-Dick* was published, when there were 736 whaling vessels registered under the American flag; from 1846 to 1851, the average was 638. Given that the average vessel for a whaling voyage was between 16 and 36 people, the number of people at sea in 1846 would have likely ranged from 12,000 to over 26,000, or more than 5 percent of the population of the state of Maine, Jewett's chosen region, in 1840.

But the population alone does not a region make. What does, notes Miller, is the commonality of experience by those at sea and by those awaiting their return on land that forged a sense of cohesiveness, which was often the result of intense boredom. Miller points out that this boredom means that much of the literature produced by the whale men is literature of the mundane; in only one in every hundred or so journals is there a break from the litany of day-to-day drudgery aboard a seagoing vessel to include scraps of poetry or commentary on the day's events (9). Miller argues that the cohesiveness was lost by the mid-1800s when the crews, which formerly had been comprised primarily of young men of means, gave way to more a diverse make-up and incorporated considerably more inland Americans and foreigners (10).

That commonality of experience in the maritime region can also be claimed both by a common seafaring jargon (one peppered liberally throughout both *Moby-Dick* and *The*

Country of the Pointed Firs) and by the commonality of disability in the whaling profession. As Simon P. Newman notes, "in a harsh and demanding profession, long-term sailors endured disease, back-breaking work, inadequate provisions, low wages, piracy, and impressment," all experiences which left a "literal mark" on the seafarers (66-67). Although Newman doesn't discuss it, the same could be said of the women who were left behind while the men went to sea; their lives were filled with the solitary birthing and caring for children and the need to keep those children fed and clothed and alive during the months and years that their husbands spent at sea.

After reading these gaps and flaws in depictions of sea life, I contend that life at sea as depicted by Jewett and Melville functions as a fluid American maritime region during the mid-to late 19th century. As a result of their ability to depict this region, I argue that reading Jewett and Melville's texts together become considerably more important.

Intimacy Defined

I'm using the term "intimacy" here to suggest at the very least the state of closeness in observation, knowledge, feeling, proximity, and/or experience of the characters and particularly of the communities in this text, hence my focus on "collective" rather than individual or coupled intimacy. I'm not using the term as a euphemism for sexual intercourse, although sexual intercourse may indeed be a component of some of the intimacies suggested in these texts. If that is the case, I'll address those instances in a close reading. My usage here also has some particular critical roots: first, in Lauren Berlant's conception of the word as she articulates it in the introduction to the essay collection *Intimacy*, which encourages a "mobile process of attachment" that is built

relationally rather than systematically. Berlant rejects the idea that intimacy is only defined by what normative ideologies and public domains would suggest and insists that the intimacies of daily life are just as valuable: in Berlant's conception, love and community and patriotism exist alongside aggression and disagreement and misanthropy. Berlant's notion of intimacy in that text is a mobile space that honors contradictory desires; what Berlant calls her "minor intimacies"—the kind of intimacies that are often shuffled to the margins or that, as Berlant says, "have no canon"—have elbowed for space in the same fashion as have minor literatures (4-5). But I also root this definition for intimacy in the notion of queer intimacy, particularly intimacies established in necessary relation to a queer counterpublic. This definition is articulated by Berlant and Michael Warner in a later essay called "Sex in Public" in that same essay collection. This concept of queer intimacy, they note, is a world-building compilation of the kinds of intimacies that "are only recognized as intimate in queer culture" and that have been both minimized and criminalized, "the kinds of intimacy that bear no relation to domestic space, to kinship, to the couple form, to property, or to nation" (558). Thus, the intimacy that I see represented here does rely on closeness, on knowledge, on experience, but it is comprised of the routines and behaviors that are mundane and strange and those that prize the collective over the coupled - in essence, it is an intimacy that decries the normative hegemony of heterosexuality in favor of, as Berlant and Warner tell it, the "inventiveness" and "fragility" of queerness (558). This conception of intimacy, while not new, aligns most clearly for me with the fluid origins both of freak show texts and the maritime region that I read in the gaps and flaws of my texts under study.

Reading Queer Collective Intimacy in Moby-Dick

The first and the most obvious example of queer intimacy in *Moby-Dick* that deserves analysis using this model is the relationship between Queequeg and Ishmael. A great deal has been made in scholarship about Queequeg and Ishmael's queerness; that is, of course, no secret. The raft of criticism that exists on this relationship has posited a variety of explanations for the behavior of these two men, and I do not wish here to discard those fruitful reasonings. Instead, I'd like to look more closely at the nature of the relationship that Melville articulates between the two men and what happens to that relationship once the two men board the *Pequod*. By close reading the gaps and flaws in this section of *Moby-Dick* the way we read the gaps and flaws in the Fejee mermaid ad—with an eye toward what seems to be obfuscated or hidden in the history of interactions between the two characters—I'm better able to understand the fluid origins of the relationship between Ishamel and Queequeg and how it thrives in the maritime region, which highlights it as a representation not just of individual queer intimacy, but of a collective one.

Ishmael, who is riddled with thoughts of both poverty and suicide, seeks out a space on the *Pequod* vessel because he has "little or no money in my purse, and nothing particular to interest me on shore" (18). The choice, he says, is really no choice at all, but instead the only option in which his fragile mental state leaves him: "This is my substitute for pistol and ball" (18). Ishmael's meeting with Queequeg, however, spurs on a series of intimate identifications that distract Ishmael from his despair and isolation. When Queequeg first enters his room, for example, he notices his tattoos, and his first thought is of "a story of a white man - a whaleman too - who, falling among the

cannibals, had been tattooed by them" (34). Ishmael then concludes that Queequeg "in the course of his distant voyages, must have met with a similar adventure" (34). It is interesting, first of all, that Ishmael assumes that Queequeg is a white man like himself who has been overtaken by cannibals and not a cannibal himself. The mention of cannibals, however, infuses the scene with an undertone of homoeroticism, even though Queequeg has not yet even gotten into bed with Ishmael. In his deft analysis of the parallels between portrayals of cannibalism and homosexuality in the 19th century, Caleb Crain points out that there was a word for cannibals and cannibalism relatively early in the period, but there was no word for homosexuality until 1892 (26). The concept of homosexuality, says Crain, was not an identity as we think of it today, but instead was "at most a sensibility" (27). Still, says Crain, there were loose connections that nineteenth century readers made between homosexuality and cannibalism: they "shared a rhetorical form" and both were "represented as 'the unspeakable'" (28).

It is important to acknowledge, as Ralph J. Poole notes, that the discourse on cannibalism was a manifestation of nineteenth-century colonialism and that there is danger in conflating this colonial manifestation with queer desire. However, because this was part and parcel of the nineteenth-century reader's mindset, it cannot be abandoned as an interrogative tool, merely considered with an awareness of its colonialist legacy. Although twenty-first century readers are unlikely to make the same connection between cannibalism and homosexuality, the hidden message would have been clear to nineteenth century readers: by having Ishmael immediately assume that the harpooner who has entered his room is a white man who has been "falling" among the cannibals and is

"tattooed" by them, Ishmael's mind is immediately making assumptions about Queequeg's sexuality.

Ishmael does not assume Queequeg's whiteness for long; in the space of two pages of text, his perception of Queequeg becomes more fluid, and his language reflective of that, although in the case of Queequeg, that fluidity is at first more hostile. In short order, Ishmael begins to refer to him as a "wild cannibal," making the jump from assumptions about Queequeg's sexuality to outright suggestions of aberrant behavior. As Crain also points out, "in Melville's day, the savages of the South Pacific islands were infamous for both their cannibalism and their promiscuity" (28). After a brief altercation with Queequeg which involved the "horrid flourishings of his tomahawk" - a scene which suggests rape - Ishmael is calmed by the landlord who tells him that Queequeg would never harm him. It is notable that Ishamel's fear is quelled by the appearance of a white man telling him that Queequeg is safe; this is, after all, in keeping with the colonialist impulses of the cannibal trope. But it does allow Ishamel the ability to realize that Queequeg is "a whole, clean, comely looking cannibal" (36), as if able-bodiedness, absence of grime, and aesthetic appeal somehow normalizes what was in the nineteenth century a weighty taboo. It is that process of normalization that somehow allow Ishamel to climb into bed with Queequeg and to sleep a sleep that was never better in his life (36).

When Ishamel wakes up the next morning, it is to find "Queequeg's arm thrown over me in the most loving and affectionate manner. You had almost thought I had been his wife" (36). The suggestion of matrimony here between the two men is clear and, combined with Melville's earlier suggestions of Queequeg's cannibalistic tendencies, it is likely that nineteenth-century readers would have inferred a homosexual relationship

between these two characters. Yet the reference to cannibalism has here been stripped away, leaving a gap that must be read accordingly; the scene, then, is left only with the physical and emotional intimacy of the matrimonial bed, the suggestion of violence and violation that the earlier references to cannibalism imparted now removed. It is as if Melville uses the signal word of the day—cannibalism—to suggest the relationship that he wants communicated to his audience about his characters but then attempts to remove the element of stigma, infusing the scene with normalcy in lieu of the "unspeakable." Instead, there is first the suggestion that Queequeg's body is an "interminable Cretan labyrinth" (37). Parker and Hayward's footnote in the 2002 Norton Critical Edition of *Moby-Dick* indicates that the labyrinth to which Melville is referring is "in Greek mythology, the maze that imprisoned the half-human, half-bull Minotaur" (37); Queequeg's body becomes, then, a gap itself, a maze into which Ishmael must venture and get lost, and an entity that houses a human-animal hybrid that could be a threat. This means his body itself is a fluid, porous site, is capable of boundary crossing, bolstering his reputation as both foreign and queer as well as, perhaps, dangerous. Because the quilt and Queequeg are in this same scene "so blended in their hues together" in Ishmael's eyes, this also suggests that Queequeg and the quilt are bleeding into one another, the quilt itself taking on some of Queequeg's savagery, and Queequeg taking on some of the quilt's domestic presence and material history. This is, as we must remember, the second time in a very short span of text where Queequeg's fluidity as a character has been emphasized. Interestingly, this moment, when compared to the more subtle suggestions of Ishmael burrowing into the labyrinth of Queequeg's body and Queequeg's animal physicality, is the most graphic scene of copulation thus far in the text. While Ishamel is

"married" to Queequeg, it is the quilt and Queequeg that are corporeally linked. As a result, this scene of the intimate marital bed of these two men combined with the queering of copulation establishes this practice as a routine of daily life in the maritime region of Melville's novel. In addition, however, it forces the scene's queerness beyond the confines of these two characters and disperses it throughout other elements in the scene, foreshadowing the collective queerness that disperses itself throughout later scenes in the novel.

This strange scene, however, is followed by an even stranger recounting by Ishmael of how the "weight and pressure" of Queequeg made him think of a story from his childhood where he had committed some childhood mischief, was consigned to bed by his stepmother, and then awoke to the feeling of a "supernatural hand…placed in mine" (37). As Elizabeth Savage notes, there are many scholarly reads on this particular scene, but she ultimately finds most of them unsatisfying because they don't adequately address why Ishmael parallels this experience with the feeling of being in Queequeg's arms. Savage, then, offers another compelling argument: that it is clear that Queequeg represents the forbidden, but he also represents the "adult, the racial, sexual, and gender formation" that Ishmael has come to crave and that helps him to become a "rugged individualist"(102).

Savage's argument is compelling; but I would also argue here for an alternate reading that examines the moment when Ishmael feels the phantom hand in his as key to understanding this scene: "For what seemed ages piled on ages, I lay there, frozen with the most awful fears, not daring to drag away my hand; yet ever thinking that if I could but stir it one single inch, the horrid spell would be broken" (37). This scene comes at the

conclusion of "a nightmare of a doze" and an environment "half steeped in dreams" (37) for Ishmael; he remembers the sensation for "days and weeks and months afterwards" when he struggles to explain the "mystery" to himself. Ishmael draws parallels between these two scenes in great part that are experiential; both Queequeg's entry to Ishmael's bedroom and the childhood episode begin after moments of sleep or dozing, both occur in darkness and in the moments of disorientation that follow waking, and both involve a figure that is either invisible or initially indeterminate. Ishmael has made these connections, in essence, in part because his mind is able to recall that childhood similarity and is making a connection to the incident that is similar to the experience of deja vu.

However, this is not the only reason for the parallel in Ishmael's mind. As Robert Azzarello argues of the "A Squeeze of the Hand" chapter—another moment in the text is often suggested as indicative of Melville's homosexual and homosocial tendencies—the hands in "A Squeeze of the Hand" become a form of "tactile experience" and "a source of knowledge" (71), both sensual and sexual. If we use this scene to inform upon Ishmael's earlier childhood episode, it becomes clear that what Ishmael is attempting to describe is a way of using tactile experience to better know something and to seek out intimacy with it. In the childhood episode, however, there is no body in close proximity other than his own. I would suggest that Azzarello's reading of the "A Squeeze of the Hand" chapter combined with the reader's knowledge that Ishmael had been confined to bed with little to do for sixteen hours and his admitted boredom suggest that this memory, although hazy, was likely Ishmael's first experience with masturbation. His young age, however, may have made making sense of those sensations quite difficult, so his brain interpreted the experience as simultaneously frightening and delightful, something could

neither cease nor fully understand. It is also likely that this was the moment for young Ishmael when he may have first become aware of the nature of his sexual desire for men. As a result, Ishmael's subconscious adult brain makes the connection between an episode of youthful masturbation and his feelings while in Queequeg's marital clasp, and as readers, we are able to make that connection more explicit, even if Ishmael cannot. The scene also establishes not only a through line for the dispersal of queerness in the collective everyday life of the maritime region but also a through line for the typical rather than abhorrent nature of homosexual desire.

The relationship between Queequeg and Ishmael, then, whether sexual or simply an expression of physical and emotional intimacy, establishes a manner of interaction typical of the maritime region, and it functions as a narrative catalyst for the dispersal of queerness throughout Melville's novel. Indeed, queerness seems to spread from Queequeg and Ishmael's bed and into the streets of New Bedford; Ishmael notes that although Queequeg seemed shocking to him, once he walked the streets of New Bedford, Queequeg's strangeness was rendered commonplace: "in New Bedford, actual cannibals stand chatting at street corners; savages outright; many of whom yet carry their bones unholy flesh. It makes a stranger stare" (41). In addition to the broad array of South Sea islanders who walk the streets, Ishamel sees sailors from Vermont and New Hampshire; what is intriguing about the mention of them is that he treats them rhetorically with the same sense of awe he affords the "cannibals." In fact, as Ishmael points out, it is not just Queequeg who is queer, but the entirety of New Bedford (42).

The queerness also disperses onto the *Pequod*, and as a result, it provides both an interesting support for the claims of the sanctification of queerness in the maritime region

depicted in part in Melville's novel. It is clear that the boat is affected with the same manner of strangeness that walks the streets of New Bedford. The boat is a motley construction: she is described as an "rare old craft" that was "long seasoned" and "weather-stained," her hull "darkened like a French grenadier's who has alike fought in Egypt and Siberia" her bow "bearded," her masts "cut on the coast of Japan" and standing "stiffly up like the spines of the three old kings of Cologne," her decks wrinkled like "the…flagstone in Canterbury Cathedral where Becket bled" (69). This description takes the same tone of wonder and veneration that the descriptions in the Fejee mermaid ad take; in essence, the description helps establish the *Pequod* and its strange crew as a made freak, one both noble and horrible to behold.

But the crew is just as motley as the boat, if not more so. The listing of characters and their narratives in Chapters 26 through 29 are equivalent to the introduction that Ishmael gave himself in the first chapter and that he affords Queequeg in Chapter 12. As with the introductory description of the *Pequod*, these descriptions function similarly to the Fejee mermaid ad: as a promotion for the show that begins in Chapter 39 with the first night watch. Here, characters, like freaks, if not prominent enough to be awarded a full name, are identified only by their ethnicities and function: "Maltese Sailor"; "Azores Sailor"; "Tahitian Sailor" (147-149). This approach is also mirrored in Chapter 32, "Cetology," where whales are also presented by name and their defining characteristics and behaviors. While there is a clear parallel between the freak show's advance courier promotional techniques and Melville's introduction of his parade of characters, these descriptions also help to establish the population of the maritime region, one that is rich

with diversity and where queerness is routine and dispersed throughout the populace in a way that helps to establish the framework of an initial community bond.

On board the *Pequod,* the relationship between Queequeg and Ishmael seems to take a backseat; in fact, it seems to disappear from view altogether, along with Ishmael's strong first-person narrative voice. Indeed, Chapter 21 is the last of Melville's chapters to focus primarily on Ishmael's "I" perspective; by the time Chapter 22 begins, the "I" of Ishmael only appears a handful of times. While others may argue that the reasons for this indicate that Queequeg and Ishmael's relationship is less important, I argue instead that this indicates that it is moreso. Indeed, in many ways the relationship between the two men becomes the template for the relationships that the crew develop with one another once aboard the *Pequod,* a key manifestation of collective intimacy in the text. Beginning in Chapter 12, Ishmael provides us a with a hint of this when he shares his desire to join a whaling vessel out of Nantucket and Queequeg "at once resolved to accompany me to that island, ship aboard the same vessel, get into the same watch, the same boat, the same mess with me, in short to share my every hap; with both my hands in his, boldly dip into the Potluck of both worlds. To all this I joyously assented" (60). When read against their previous "marriage" (56-57), which Queequeg claims is merely a bosom friendship, this commitment seems to smack even more of lasting matrimony. Because, as Pamela A. Miller notes, many whaling voyages such as the *Pequod*'s stretched into years, and because many men left their wives on shore, Queequeg's decision to join Ishmael aboard a vessel where they will live in close proximity to one another for a matter of years is a vow at least equally symbolic of the kind of love, intimacy and lasting commitment that more traditional marriage ceremonies might also suggest. Ishmael also reflects

Queequeg's vows, albeit later and in a slightly different fashion: in Chapter 24, "The Advocate," Ishmael immediately aligns himself and Queequeg not only to one another, but to the business of whaling: "and as this business of whaling has somehow come to be regarded among landsmen as a rather unpoetical and disreputable pursuit; therefore, I am all anxiety to convince ye, ye landsmen, of the injustice hereby done to us hunters of whales" (97). This introduction, which then details the history, triumph, and difficulties of the whaling enterprise, serves two purposes: first, it establishes the historical landscape and fundamental rules that govern the maritime region. Second, it also functions as a stand-in explanation and justification for homosexual and homosocial partnership. That "splicing," however, as Ishmael illustrates rhetorically, is not just to the person (Queequeg), but to the collective queerness of the maritime region at large. Ishmael commits himself to both Queequeg and to whaling and comes to its defense. As a result, this is one of the first moments that Ishmael illustrates that one of the projects of this narrative is reinforcing the existence of an American region that celebrates not just queer love and partnership, but the experience of collective intimacy, an inherently queer relational construct even in the twenty-first century in America.

What, then, is collective intimacy? It is a perspective that focuses not on the collective experience of a group of people, but on people's willingness to both engage in the collective experience of bonding and partnership and to allow others to bear witness to how those relationships develop organically among one another. When you add "queer" to the phrase, the idea is synonymous with what Berland and Warner note about the nature of queer culture and its ability to use relations "as a context for witnessing intense and personal affect while elaborating a public world of belonging and

transformation" (558). As Ishmael and Queequeg committed themselves not just singly to each other but also to the "business of whaling" and the voyage of the *Pequod* itself, it is only natural that, once aboard the ship and departed for their voyage, their singular relationship takes increasingly less narrative space and that their narrative lens broadens to include the individual and collective intimate experiences of others aboard the crew. It isn't that Ishmael and Queequeg's relationship disappears; rather it is that their relationship expands to include the entire collective, in essence, the entirety of the *Pequod*'s crew. As a result, the marriage under study in this novel is indeed a marriage between men, atypical enough in the nineteenth century, but it is also doubly queer because it is a polygamous one between the men of all races, ethnicities and abilities. These men have married themselves to the *Pequod* and its voyage, expanding the representation of intimacy in this text from the relationship between two men to the relationship between the collective crew of the *Pequod*.

As a result of the identification of this collective commitment, other relationships in *Moby-Dick* rise to the surface and are given the same narrative weight in later chapters that were devoted to Ishmael and Queequeg's early on. This supposed narrative flaw could be characterized as a distraction or divergence from the novel's earlier focus on Ishmael and Queequeq. But by reading it in the same way we read the Fejee mermaid—for what is hidden, not what is easily seen—we find compelling evidence of the fluid provenance of this novel's multitude of relationships that reveal its hidden archive of collective queer intimacy. The relationship between Ahab and Pip, for example, becomes particularly important as the novel progresses and provides further evidence of the text's hidden trove of queer collective intimacies. When Pip is first introduced in Chapter 27, he

is immediately cast as a tragic caricature steeped in minstrelsy: "Black Little Pip…Poor Alabama boy! On the grim Pequod's forecastle, ye shall ere long see him, beating his tambourine; preclusive of the eternal time, when sent for, to the great quarter-deck on high, he was bid strike in with angels, and beat his tambourine in glory; called a coward here, hailed a hero there!" Unlike Melville's descriptions of other crew members such as Starbuck (101) and Stubb (104), for example, which spend significant time on their history, heritage, and physical attributes, Pip is cast only as Black and from Alabama. Unlike descriptions of Tashtego and Daggoo (106), which exhibit Barnum's rhetorical freak show technique of heightening the exoticism of the character's "unmixed Indian" and "coal-black negro" heritage by lauding them with the dual monikers of warrior and savage and Biblical lyricism, Pip is only known for his lone tambourine on the forecastle and the foreshadowing of his unfortunate demise. He is not a person at all, but a vehicle for music-making, a vehicle without a history and defined only by his horrific death. His best parallel, in fact, in terms of the nature of his characterization becomes Ahab.

By this point in the text, Pip has been implicitly and rhetorically married to Ahab already; Melville ends Chapter 27 with Pip's description, and immediately follows that with Chapter 28, which is all about Ahab alone. Like Pip, Ahab is described as a tragic caricature, a person with a disability who seems to hover between corporeality and object:

> There seemed to be no sign of common bodily illness about him…He looked like a man cut away from the stake, when the fire has overruningly wasted all the limbs without consuming them, or taking away one particle from their compacted

> aged robustness. His whole high, broad form, seemed made of solid bronze, and shaped in an unalterable mould, like Cellini's cast Perseus. (108)

In part, the suggestion that Ahab is the person who was burned at the stake and lived is because he is not fully human. In addition, he is described as sporting a scar that is akin to being "branded" and as standing atop a "barbaric" white leg. From his very introduction, then, like Pip, he is depicted not as a human with a history, but as a collection of assembled parts, many of which are fatally flawed. Given the similarities of their descriptions, it is of little surprise that Ahab and Pip are linked.

It is true that Ahab himself is flawed. His monomaniacism, as both Melville and numerous scholars call it, or his inability to release himself from single-minded pursuit of the whale, is far more dangerous to his humanity than any of his physical impairments. But given that the whale can also be read as representative of the phallus, Ahab's pursuit is symbolic of the dangers of single-minded passion and desire. It is this focus that is both one of the unifying moments for his crew and a signifier of the dangers ahead: this monomania, then gives rise less to the collective intimacy that we see in the relationship between Queequeg and Ishmael but instead to its tipping point, when the lure of one individual gives rise to a cultish fanaticism.

To Ahab's credit, however, these are not the only moments that define his character in the marriage of the crew of the *Pequod*. It is his interactions with Pip that tend to restore his balance, to bring back some semblance of his humanity that the other members can see showcased and thus can partake of. In particular, his interactions with Pip after Pip's traumatic abandonment by Stubb illustrate Ahab's potential for compassion. The incident is rooted in Pip's own startle response: he had been asked to fill

in on the whale catching boat, for which he was unprepared. When the whale rapped the bottom with his tail, Pip jumped out of the boat into the ocean, terrified, and got caught in the line. Stubb cut the line and released the whale, but he promises Pip that if it happens again, he wouldn't help him, because Pip isn't as valuable to the community as the whale is: "we can't afford to lose whales by the likes of you; a whale would sell for thirty times what you would, Pip, in Alabama" (321). When Pip is startled and jumps in again, Stubb is good to his word: he leaves Pip floating in the ocean alone, seemingly for hours, which has a profound effect on Pip's psyche:

> …the sea had jeeringly kept his finite body up, but drowned the infinite of his soul. Not drowned entirely, though. Rather carried down alive to wondrous depths, where strange shapes of the unwarped primal world glided to and fro before his passive eyes; and the miser-merman, Wisdom, revealed his hoarded heaps; and among the joyous, heartless, ever-juvenile eternities, Pip saw the multitudinous, God-omnipresent, coral insects, that out of the firmament of waters heaved the colossal orbs. (321)

Much has been made of this particular excerpt from *Moby-Dick*. It's a popular one for scholars to use to talk about the menace of the sea and the impact of spiritual awakening, as well as the loss of the self. But I contend that Pip's trauma here is not caused by the ocean itself and his experience within it, but instead by Stubb, who violates the rules of marriage in the maritime region: instead of supporting the queer collective intimacy that is part and parcel of life aboard the *Pequod*, Stubb chooses to punish Pip for his fear, cutting him off completely from life in the collective.

Pip is left alone in the ocean long enough that he thinks he might never return; as a result, when he is carried down to the "wondrous depths," he finds himself desperately searching for the comfort and community of the collective, and this is what he recognizes in the ocean's bounty. Pip's experience beneath the surface of the water is a hostile one; rather than being welcomed with open arms, he is greeted by "strange shapes of the unwarped primal world" and the "joyous, heartless, ever-juvenile eternities." There is little in this environment that is receptive to him or enveloping; this is not his ongoing archival process but that of another that is wholly unfamiliar. In fact, the only entity that allows Pip to engage rather than simply observe is the "miser-merman Wisdom." As a result, Pip's drowning is a spiritual one rather than a physical one; he feels the loss of "the infinite of his soul" which is what connects him to the collective rather than casting him as a solitary individual. This combined with the interaction with the merman's Wisdom forces Pip to a point of reckoning. With great pain, he recognizes his status as an outsider in both the ocean collective and in the collective represented by the *Pequod*. This status combined with his abandonment means that what is killed inside Pip is his ability to merge intimately with the group. That inability to join in the collective is so foreign to the crew members of the *Pequod* that it manifests itself as idiocy when he re-boards the ship. Pip is not a victim of near-drowning whose brain has been addled by the water; he is, instead, a victim of abandonment by his community, a spouse cast out of a polygamous marriage, a story cast out of the hidden archive of marginalized lives. It is this deep rift, this gap, that manifests itself in Pip as the emotional and spiritual equivalent of an attachment disorder.

Whether consciously or subconsciously, Melville also recognizes that it is this breach in the collective that is the cause of Pip's plight, and he takes great pains to attempt to heal it and to reassert its primacy in his narrative. The chapter that follows Pip's trauma, after all, is Chapter 94, "A Squeeze of the Hand," another well-traveled critical path in Melville's narrative and one already referenced in part earlier in my chapter. In light of the damage caused to the queer collective intimacy of the maritime region by Ahab's cultish collectivism and Pip's abandonment by the community, this chapter reads somewhat differently. Instead of simply another marker of Melville's fascination with homosociality and homosexuality, this chapter now reads also as an attempt to reassert the importance of queer collective intimacy in the maritime region. Ishmael's feverish monologue on hand squeezing is cast in a new light: the squeezing all around, the squeezing into one another, the squeezing "universally into the very milk and sperm of kindness" (323) becomes not solely representative of masturbation or a homosexual act, but indicative of the community's need for intimate suture, the necessity of resisting unification under the banner of blind anger and the need to incorporate even the most peripheral of members into the fabric of society.

As Melville often does, his establishment of an intimate relationship between Ahab and Pip reminds us that although the collective is important, there is still room for personal intimacy, although not necessarily heterosexual intimacy, within the boundaries of the collective community and within the landscape of the maritime region. It also asserts that when a collective breach occurs, sometimes the only way to integrate that person into the collective again is with small measures such as establishing a bond between the alienated individual and one member of the collective. What is particularly

interesting in this instance, however, is that it is because of Ahab that Pip is both abandoned and saved. In Chapter 36, Ahab calls the crew together for the first time and gives them their charge: “Drink, ye harpooners! drink and swear, ye men that man the deathful whaleboat’s bow - Death to Moby Dick! God hunt us all, if we do not hunt Moby Dick to his death!” (142) Ahab’s explicit wording here states that he wants all of his whale men to pursue Moby Dick to his death, and if they don’t, then God can hunt them down.

What the crew members extrapolate from Ahab’s message, however, is that anyone who wavers in the face of that charge deserves to die. Because Pip is fearful of the whale’s tail slap and jumps from the boat, the crew members decide that his lack of courage means that he doesn’t deserve to be rescued from the ocean and try to get him to release the line that he’s desperately clinging to: “It drags hard; I guess he’s holding on. Jerk him, Tahiti! Jerk him off; we haul in no cowards here. Ho! There’s his arm just breaking water. A hatchet! A hatchet! Cut it off - we haul in no cowards here” (391). Not only does the crew member want to break Pip’s hold on the rope, but he also suggests that they should cut his arm off for attempting to board the ship again. The violence of this interaction is, in fact, contrary to what Ahab suggested in his original monologue: that it was God’s decision who lived or died, not human’s.

The crew members here are so overcome by Ahab’s single-minded focus for the voyage that they ignore the nuance inherent in Pip’s situation. In his own way, so does Ahab. Once Pip is aboard, spouting what seems to be nonsense, Ahab states that his empathy for Pip is spurred both by what he claims is Pip’s abandonment by the gods and Pip’s lucklessness: “Oh, ye frozen heavens! Look down here. Ye did beget this luckless

child, and have abandoned him, ye creative libertines" (392). Here is yet another of the hazards of Ahab's monomaniacism: he cannot see Pip's culpability for his situation, chalking it up instead as mere luck, and neither can he see the crew's role in exacerbating Pip's dilemma, instead blaming the gods for abandoning him. By attributing Pip's position to luck and the heavens and ignoring the role of free will and human fallibility, he foreshadows—and, perhaps, assists in - the *Pequod*'s failing and ultimately its downfall.

Although Ahab's monomaniacism often critiqued as a flaw, in this scene, it is crucial to my study. Ahab's recognition of Pip's vulnerability and his need for support is key to understanding how this scene reflects on the queer collective intimacy of the *Pequod* and the maritime region. After Ahab blames the gods and welcomes Pip aboard again, he exhibits a profound and nearly instant attachment to him: "Here, boy; Ahab's cabin shall be Pip's home henceforth, while Ahab lives. Thou toughest my inmost centre, boy; thou art tied to me by cords woven of my heart-stings. Come, let's down." (392). Despite Ahab's seeming ruthlessness, this interaction illustrates that Ahab's humanity has not yet been lost, even if his monomaniacism has managed to skew his ability to fully understand it. It is, as Edward F. Edinger notes, one of the first moments in Melville's text that Ahab exhibits a "human feeling" (131). His profound and instant connection with Pip is heartening because it means that Ahab recognizes fallibility and is willing to understand and forgive it. What it also illustrates is Ahab's profound need for intimate connection that goes beyond collectivity. Pip, too, seems to need that same kind of connection: when he reaches out to take Ahab's hand that has been extended to him, he says that had he had this kind of connection, he might never have been lost in the first

place and intimates that it is a lifeline: “Ah, now, had poor Pip but felt so kind a thing as this, perhaps he had ne’er been lost! This seems to me, sir, as a man-rope; something that weak souls may hold by.” He then asks Perth to come and “rivet” their two hands together, the black and the white, “for I will not let this go.” Not only does this scene remind us of the importance of hands and what they represent about knowledge and community in Moby Dick; it also reinforces the idea that the linkage to the collective begins with the individual and, like the suggestions of “splicing” earlier in the text, this connection is both tangible and unwavering.

As with Queequeg and Ishmael, there is in the relationship between Ahab and Pip the suggestion of not just intimacy but homosexual love. It is not enough for Ahab to simply take Pip under his wing; he must join hands with him, which hearkens back to Ishmael’s initial masturbatory scene as well as to the squeezing of hands in Chapter 94. But it also seems significant that Ahab takes Pip and brings him to his cabin and likely to his bed, suggesting the kind of intimacy that Queequeg and Ishmael shared together before boarding the *Pequod*. It is in many ways a complementary relationship; Pip acknowledges the linkage of black and white as between Queequeg and Ishamel, and old Manxman acknowledges the likely insanity of both Ahab and Pip and how they counterbalance one another: “There go two daft ones…one daft with strength, the other with weakness” (392). This is in fact how the collective comes back into balance; as Edinger notes, “Pip is Ahab’s shadow, his opposite half. Together they make a whole” (132).

In part, it is this sense of the continual seeking of complement and balance, even in the midst of a seemingly flawed and imbalanced narrative, that illustrates how effectively

and continuously *Moby-Dick* reaffirms a space for queer collective intimacy in the maritime region. It is that very continuousness that emphasizes the text's ability to use its flaws to archive the stories sometimes missed by critics. Region—and the maritime region in particular—are reconfirmed as not physical location, but as a manner of interaction, a way of creating and maintaining a type of community. Many Melville scholars suggest that this sense of community is largely confined to representations of masculinity; as Mark Lloyd Taylor notes, "the book is full of masculine characters and almost devoid of feminine ones" (333). While I agree that feminine representation is more scant than male, I would still argue that if we use the reading technique that we used with the Fejee mermaid ad, we can still read the gaps and flaws in the texts and uncover the ways in which the feminine has a prominent role in *Moby-Dick*. Frequently, the sea is cast as masculine to the land's femininity, and I would argue that the characteristics exhibited by Ishmael when he casts himself in the role of wife and by Ahab when he casts himself as Pip's caregiver are prominent and powerful representations of what is frequently categorized as feminine behavior. This blend of characteristics of masculine and feminine gives both Ishmael and Ahab fluid gender origins; recognizing that kind of fluidity in a text already as expansive, experimental and unpredictable as *Moby-Dick* is a risk, but it also affords an opportunity to explore new understandings of the function of gender in narratives.

Still, this absence of women could, and has, been considered by many scholars to be a flaw or insufficiency in Melville's text; because women live on the outskirts rather than centrally in the narrative, the impression left is that women are somehow less important to the maritime region than are men. This absence doesn't address the larger

point of where the women themselves fit into *Moby-Dick* as well as into the maritime region. It does seem important to note here that while the role of women seems scant in *Moby-Dick*, Taylor also notes that other texts written around the same time as *Moby-Dick*—namely, *Pierre* and "The Paradise of Bachelors" and "The Tartarus of Maids"—have a significant representation by women. So, while Melville's focus on this text was clearly not on the experience of females, particularly in life at sea in the maritime region, it's doubtful that this absence failed to cross his mind. It is instead likely that he was deeply aware of the absence of women in this space. In many ways, this reflects also Elizabeth Savage's assessment of *Moby-Dick*, which she claims is an inclusive, even feminist text because of its "impossible abundance" and "purposeful uncertainty" (95).

The Maritime Region's Feminine Balance in The Country of the Pointed Firs

It is at this point in my argument that the work of Sarah Orne Jewett becomes particularly relevant to a comprehensive reading of *Moby-Dick*. The absence of women in Melville's text, I contend, is not feminine erasure, but instead a gap that serves as an open door, a site into which Melville invites another writer to step to offer a counterbalance to his depiction of a largely male queer collective as the primary population of the maritime region. It is into this gap and into this period of the decline of seafaring that Jewett's work begins. While Melville's work describes in detail the view of life aboard the ship and what is visible from its deck, Jewett's is, at least in part, the view from the shore. If we use the Fejee mermaid ad as a model for reading Jewett just as we read Melville, if we track the gaps and flaws in *The Country of the Pointed Firs* similar to the way in which we tracked them in *Moby-Dick*, it becomes evident that Melville's depiction of the

maritime region and its hidden archive of stories of queer collective intimacy sketched out a foundation that has been elaborated on, expanded on, and in many cases, improved upon, in Jewett's text.

By its very nature, *The Country of the Pointed Firs* first further defines the parameters of the maritime region. It is clear that not only does Jewett's text qualify as an example of American regionalism because of its depiction of small-town coastal life in Maine, but also because of it offers additional insight into the language, code of conduct, and customs that comprise the maritime region. Anita Duneer notes that Jewett's text features a host of female characters "whose stories demonstrate the centrality of the sea in their own lives through their active navigation of coastal waters." Their stories, she notes, "both echo and subvert the sea yarns of aging captains, who try to reconcile their own romanticized memories with present realities" (223). Like Melville's text, the narrative here is episodic; each chapter in Jewett's text functions as a moment that furthers the larger narrative arc about the urban narrator's visit to the small town of Dunnet Landing. Each chapter also could function as a short story in and of itself, giving the sense that, as in Melville's novel, each time the reader moves from one chapter to the other, the reader is also moving from one shore or island to another, traversing the seas from location to location across the vast expanse of the maritime region. As in Melville's work, the narrative is replete with the imagery and language of the sea, illustrating that this is the foundational rhetoric that governs the landscape of both novels.

In Melville's text, the language associated with the sea and seafaring often relates specifically to the enterprise of whaling. As noted previously in this chapter, whether that language is discussing the squeezing of whale sperm, the details of a particular whale

species, or the rescue of a crew member who has found himself adrift in the ocean, all of those conversations do perform the communicative work of life aboard a whaling vessel. But they also carry the subtext that either reinforces or damages the queer collective intimacy that is a fundamental, yet often hidden, characteristic of the maritime region. The language and rhetoric of seafaring in Jewett's text works similarly. Jewett's language, however, is initially metaphorical in its depiction of queer collective intimacy. It describes, for example, the arrival of Mrs. Todd's dear friend Mrs. Fosdick as appearing "like a strange sail on the far horizon" (55). When Mrs. Todd finally allows the narrator and Mrs. Fosdick to become acquainted, the narrator compares the visit "setting in" to the same way that a tide does and how pleasing it was: "a new impulse and refreshing of the social currents and seldom visited bays of memory appeared to have begun" (59). When the conversation itself begins to take off, the narrator speaks of it as the ocean itself: "That very first evening my friends plunged into a borderless sea of reminiscences and personal news" (59). As with Melville, Jewett uses the language of the sea to communicate community, closeness, and the bonding that happens between people who are sharing a life together, in this case women rather than men.

It is not a coincidence that much of this metaphorical language of the sea is associated with Mrs. Fosdick early in the text. Mrs. Fosdick and her relationship with Mrs. Todd in particular is one of three relationships between individuals and their community in Jewett's novel that support my contention that, as in *Moby-Dick*, reading the gaps and flaws in *The Country of the Pointed Firs* reveals an iteration of American regionalism called the maritime region that is replete with hidden depictions of queer collective intimacy. Like Queequeg, Mrs. Fosdick is herself capable not only of spurring

action and realization within other characters in the text but also capable of physically and psychologically traversing the porous landscape of the maritime region established by the two texts. That's because Mrs. Fosdick, as Jewett notes, is the only character who has a foot in both the whaling era of *Moby-Dick* and Jewett's late nineteenth-century period of seafaring decline.

At first the narrator herself doesn't read the region closely enough; she doesn't recognize Mrs. Fosdick's value to Dunnet Landing. Content to exist in relative isolation in her intimate setting with Mrs. Todd, she speaks of Mrs. Fosdick's arrival as an "invasion" (55). This depiction reiterates the notion that the chapters and indeed the experiences of individuals in Dunnet Landing are replete with gaps and flaws; they are as isolated as *Moby-Dick*'s *Pequod*, vessels alone on the sea, casting about for interaction with others. When Mrs. Fosdick arrives, it becomes quickly clear quite that Mrs. Fosdick has "spent a part of her life at sea," (58); in fact, as she related to the narrator, she went to sea quite young with her family. Interestingly, her mother forgot all of Mrs. Fosdick's clothing, leaving it ashore, so when she boarded, she only had the dress she was wearing. When she outgrew that, said Mrs. Fosdick, "she just put me in a spare suit o' John's, jacket and trousers" (60). She was outfitted again as a girl once they made port, but as she notes, they were on their way to the East Indies, and "didn't put in anywhere for a good while. So I had quite a spell o' freedom" (61).

Anita Duneer observes that Mrs. Fosdick's purposeful reversion to childhood to tell a story of her life at sea "foregrounds the tensions between desire for freedom of travel and restrictions for a woman (or a girl) at sea" (231). Duneer also notes shortly afterward Bell's argument that suggests that Fosdick doesn't "want to be masculine or want to be

with men. What she regrets, however, is her loss of freedom, and this freedom is a masculine quality only in the sense that in her world, it is denied to women" (232). While it is true that Mrs. Fosdick is put back into a skirt after a time and is discouraged by that assignation, it is also important to note that Fosdick's mother grants her the freedom of men in the first place. This opening to the possibilities available to her outside the feminine gender and afforded to her by a mother figure rather than a father, is both fascinating and fruitful for Fosdick. She soon realizes that freedom is as simple as changing one's clothes, suggesting that the bounds and restrictions of gender in *The Country of the Pointed Firs* are as fluid as the maritime region itself.

This passage adeptly suggests that by adulthood, Mrs. Fosdick's understanding of freedom extends far beyond the bounds of gender: like Ishmael and Ahab, Mrs. Fosdick has fluid gender origins, albeit her gender fluidity is characterized more by her abilities rather than either her marital position or her relationship to caregiving. As a result of her youthful period of cross-dressing, by adulthood she has learned how to inhabit, rather than to pass through, a state of considerable "freedom"; she is the kind of person who feels at home either aboard a ship or on land. Yet, like Queequeg, Mrs. Fosdick is also a character who is the kind of person who easily traverses the entire landscape of the maritime region rather than being confined to either sea or shore. Mrs. Fosdick illustrates her mobility adeptly; her visit to Dunnet Landing is brief but impactful. She is the one who helps to form the fledgling queer collective out of the intimate exchanges between the narrator and Mrs. Todd; she is the one who exhibits autonomy when she expresses her desire to venture to Green Island alone. Most importantly, she is the one who shares the most juicy details about the nature of Shell-heap Island, which is the farthest voyage out

to sea that the narrator takes in her quest to become more a part of Dunnet Landing and its history. Fosdick's gossip about Shell-heap is the engine for a 20-page narrative digression about Poor Joanna, her fate on the island, and it even spurs the narrator to take a trip there alone.

The story of Shell-heap Island is one that masquerades as one of the novel's flaws but proves to be one of its most revealing narratives to lay bare the nature of the maritime region and the hidden stories of queer collective intimacy. When Shell-heap Island is introduced by Mrs. Fosdick in Chapter 13, the narrator's interest in the place is "waked"; she immediately asks Mrs. Fosdick and Mrs. Todd to tell her a bit about it. The two women relay that it is three miles past Green Island and approximately eight miles from shore, so quite a distance from Dunnett Landing. When Mrs. Fosdick and Mrs. Todd begin to impart to the narrator a bit about the history of Shell-heap Island, the narrative takes an intriguing turn: in short order, they discuss the island as inhospitable to visitors, as inhabited by a ghost of a chief, a collective of Indians, and as inhabited by cannibals:

> Yes, I remember when they used to tell queer stories about Shell-heap Island. Some said't was a great bangeing-place for the Indians, and an old chief resided there once that ruled the winds…anyway, there was Indians - you can see their shell-heap that named the island; and I've heard myself that't was one o'their cannibal places, but I never could believe it. There never was no cannibals on the coast o'Maine. (63)

Jewett situates the island firmly in the rhetoric of strangeness and oddity: she attributes Native American, South Sea, as well as New England characteristics to the spit of land, and she folds in the freighted connotations of cannibalism and its distinct

nineteenth-century connection to homosexuality. The island, then, becomes a location similar to Melville's *Pequod*, a maritime space where a multitude of different cultures and peoples cross and interact, a space of freakishness and a site where queerness is both horrible and wondrous.

In the middle of this discussion, however, is Mrs. Fosdick, and this is no accident. As previously established, Mrs. Fosdick is a character replete with fluidity, and she does considerable work to bridge the gaps between this novel and Melville's and to draw connections between the maritime region and the hidden stories of queer collective intimacy in both texts. The moment that Mrs. Todd mentions cannibalism, Mrs. Fosdick immediately interjects that she has interacted with the people who supposedly engaged in that behavior: "ought to see them painted savages I've seen when I was young out in the South Sea Islands! That was the time for folks to travel, 'way back in the old whalin' days!" (64). Mrs. Todd responds that whaling must have been "dull" for a woman, and Mrs. Fosdick's response is particularly interesting. While she does say that whaling left her feeling "rich" and that she "loved the variety," she states her response primarily relationship to time: "I used to return feelings' very slack an' behind the times, 't is true" (64). This discussion reinforces the connection between Shell-heap Island and whaling voyages; in fact, it suggests that all of the islands function a part of the landscape of the maritime region. When it comes to Mrs. Fosdick herself, by establishing herself as both a former inhabitant of the whaling era and as someone with first-hand knowledge of South Seas cannibalism, the message is clear: Mrs. Fosdick's interjection into Jewett's text is the centering of a distinctly queer character who is a longtime resident of the maritime

region and whose intimate influence continues to reverberate throughout the text in innumerable ways.

While it must be acknowledged that it is Mrs. Todd who first mentions Shell-heap Island, her mention is the equivalent of a nod to the queer collective intimacy that is already seeping in around the corners of Jewett's text. Fosdick's interjections into that conversation establish a sense of belonging and shared experience that are essential to the notion of queer collective intimacy. Shell-heap Island in particular resonates as a queer outpost, but it is a queerness that becomes commonplace as the text progresses. It seems fitting that Mrs. Todd and Mrs. Fosdick are the ones to tell the narrator Poor Joanna's story; because Joanna retreats to Shell-heap Island as the result of a broken heart, she is, by all initial appearances, a woman who has been abandoned by her community, cut off from social interaction much like Melville's Pip.

But appearances are deceiving; Poor Joanna is, in fact, very different from Pip. While Pip is isolated by Stubb from the community, Poor Joanna's decision to leave is her own. Poor Joanna's isolation is, in many ways, also something of an exaggeration: Mrs. Fosdick notes how the "waters…were white with sails" around Shell-heap Island in the fall, how another man constantly left Joanna gifts, and how other islanders would watch her chimney to see if they saw smoke in order to keep tabs on her (67). Despite Poor Joanna's physical distance from her community, unlike Pip, her community did not abandon her. Instead, they provided her with a particular kind of intimacy by honoring her desire for solitude and giving her wide berth.

Poor Joanna's isolation is distinctly queer: it isn't solely physical but also sexual and religious. Despite the pursuit of Poor Joanna by a good many upright "sails" and at

least one man keen on marrying her, Joanna refuses all men access to her island. In fact, the only one she allows to come to see her, in fact, is the Reverend, who Mrs. Todd talks about taking her for a visit on the island not long after she's married. From all appearances, Poor Joanna has begun to internalize the queerness of her cultural and historical outpost; Mrs. Todd notes that she has taken rushes gathered from the swampy areas of the island and "braided some beautiful mats for the floor and a thick cushion for the bunk" (74). In addition, she has taken shells and affixed them to the walls, and she has made sandals out of the rushes to wear on her feet. When the Reverend asks her if she has kept up with her religion on the island, Poor Joanna redirects the question and asks the Reverend if he is interested in the Indian artifacts on her shelves.

It is unquestionable that this scene hints at the desecration of native sites and cultural appropriation. But in many ways, it is also reminiscent of the kinds of remnants of Native American culture that persist in Lydia Maria Child's 1824 novel *Hobomok*. While the novel's titular character disappears into the wilderness of early America and while his half-white son is assimilated into western white culture, tangible reminders of him persist: in the name he signs on his divorce decree, in the existence of the settlement Naumkeak that he strove to protect, and in the continued critical conversation about his presence and influence. These remnants of native culture—while admittedly only shadows and while still burdened with the tremendous pain of a people displaced from their lands—will not dissipate. In this case, they are suggestive less of erasure and more of Joanna's strong and distinctly queer desire to connect with something: although she restricted herself from her larger community, she does attempt a kind of intimate communion with the detritus of the people who once populated her small island; as a

result, notes Holly Jackson, Poor Joanna becomes both chief and captive (275). It is as if her house, which Mrs. Todd notes is "as neat as a ship's cabin," is a ship perpetually out to sea and Joanna a lone seafarer who has gathered elements from each voyage and woven them into the fabric of her everyday life.

But Poor Joanna's exile, while admittedly self-imposed, is also psychological: it is similar to Pip's in that she suffers some of the same initial stigma from being marooned from the community as Pip does. Just as Pip's sin was cowardice and, for a time, he was punished and cut off from the community because of it, Poor Joanna's "unpardonable sin" is her horrible thoughts toward God that she believes made her undeserving of inclusion in the community. Terry Heller notes that in Jewett's *A Country Doctor*, Dr. Leslie states that "people have two main duties: to love God and to love each other…these are the two great commandments of Jesus" (165). Jewett is keenly aware that Poor Joanna's admitted injury is to the community itself: she does not love God, and she does not love and trust the community enough to let its collective intimacy carry her through her time of personal pain. As a result, she becomes a hermit, but despite her grave sin, Jewett does not treat her as an outcast. Instead, her hermitage becomes a commonplace feature of Dunnet Landing that the community honors. Yet in a landscape where same-sex partnerships are already given primacy, Joanna's solitude strikes the reader as particularly queer. Unlike Pip's short-lived, albeit impactful, solitude in *Moby-Dick*, Joanna's persists. While one might easily read Joanna as the seafaring ascetic, a more subdued Ahab-like character stricken with a grief and anger that wells to the surface in this more finely-attenuated world not as monomaniacism but instead as a desire for solitude, one also might make the case that Joanna is the return of Moby-Dick itself: the

lone whale, burdened with the horrors of whiteness, one who has finally wandered into calmer waters where the seafarers respond to her presence with something like respect. It is also possible for us to see her as both: Ahab and Moby-Dick, fused as one in the final battle of the *Pequod*, a wondrous freakish spectacle, perhaps like the real incarnation of the Fejee mermaid itself, that finally retires to a community where it can live out its days in peace.

While the fluid provenance of the Fejee mermaid ad teaches us to effectively read the gaps and flaws in the behaviors of Moby-Dick's characters as a function of the maritime region which reveal the stories of queer collective intimacy, the characters in *The Country of the Pointed Firs* expand that understanding immeasurably. *Moby-Dick* affords us the micro view of how the nuances of those relationships and behaviors play out among the members of a crew. Jewett's work, however, widens our frame of understanding. Instead of peering through the porthole of the ship to peek at the nuanced intimacies between men as we do in *Moby-Dick*, Jewett offers us the bird's eye view of those intimacies at work in a multitude of ways in the lives of the many women who inhabit the shores. And while the intimacies between Mrs. Fosdick and Mrs. Todd and the singular relationship of Poor Joanna contribute to that frame of understanding, no relationship provides more of a critical foundation for our understanding of a maritime region replete with queer collective intimacy than the relationship between the narrator and Mrs. Todd.

From the very moment that the narrator arrives in Dunnet Landing, it is clear that her focus is on collective intimacy rather than individual. The town of Dunnet, she notices, is "more attractive than other maritime villages of eastern Maine," seemingly

first because of the town's layout: the houses are "securely wedged and tree-nailed in among the ledges by the landing." What the narrator also makes note of on page one is also the adornments that they sport: "These houses made the most of their seaward view, and there was a gayety and determined floweriness in their bits of garden ground." But what provides the most insight into the narrator's mindset is her description of the house's windows, which suggest human-like qualities: "the small-paned high windows in the peaks of their steep gables were like knowing eyes that watched the harbor and the far sea-line beyond" (1). The vibrancy and bloom of the adornments, then, suggests jewelry around the necks of these houses, which are themselves like people. The narrator depicts these structures as akin to humans watching her arrive after a long absence, at any moment about to step forward and open their arms and welcome her into their embrace.

It makes sense, then, that the narrator describes her burgeoning love affair with the village as a "becoming acquainted with a single person"; she tracks the thread of commonality within the houses and feels affection for them all, rather than simply affection for a single one within the group. But what's also clear is that, like Poor Joanna's enforced celibate solitude, this kind of collective, polygamous love is another iteration of queer love in the nineteenth century. What makes it moreso is that so many of the narrator's future interactions with the collective are read directly through her relationship with a single woman.

The narrator's first mention of this woman, interestingly enough, are of her property and gardens: she notes that Mrs. Todd's "tiny house" has a "lack of seclusion" and that the garden was "queer" and "puzzling to a stranger." She soon discovers, however, that Mrs. Todd is an "ardent lover of herbs, both wild and tame" (3). This

alignment with growing things and with herbs in particular makes sense when we learn that Mrs. Todd is the resident herb and plant expert in Dunnet Landing. But Tammy I. Price notes that these herbs also have another function: as a subtext and, more specifically, as a system of communication that speaks directly to the experience of women in Dunnet Landing. I contend that this system, like the subtext of hands in Melville's text, is one of the tools used by the author to reiterate the novel representation of the maritime region and its revelation of stories of queer collective intimacy.

Indeed, these herbs are used specifically by Mrs. Todd to woo the narrator into a queer collective intimacy from the moment of her arrival; the narrator, while claiming a desire to withdraw, communicates that she is more than receptive to that wooing. The narrator, who has been to Dunnet Landing before, arrives just "when the busy herb-gathering season was just beginning" and when Mrs. Todd begins to brew her old-fashioned spruce beer, a popular concoction in the region. Despite the narrator's professed desire for "seclusion and uninterrupted days," she chooses to come to the town during one of its busiest seasons. Mrs. Todd, too, is clear about her intentions: she calls the narrator "darlin," she offers her early mushrooms, and she becomes more and more affectionate with every rebuff and "withdrawl" (6). And then, suddenly, the narrator is enticed by a "herb of the night," which "sends out a penetrating odor in the late evening" (6). That odor wafts into the window of Mrs. Todd's house, and they "both fell under the spell." It is at this moment that what the narrator calls a "deeper intimacy" begins. As Price notes, the herbs themselves are often aligned with depictions of Mrs. Todd as linked to ancient myth and timelessness (24); more important than this subtext, I find, however is that these herbs, even without being brewed by Mrs. Todd into healing and enticing

elixirs, cultivate intimacy even while they grow, infusing the air of Dunnet Landing with scent that is heady and rooted in a desire for close companionship. Like Melville's hands, it is not what is made of the herbs that matters most but what the herbs themselves do alone that indicates their powerful ability to cultivate queer collective intimacy.

Cynthia Goheen notes that in chapters one through seven of *The Country of the Pointed Firs*, the narrator is "withdrawn and somewhat alienated" (155), although her immersion into the community comes by the text's end. Similarly, Coby Dowdell suggests that the text is "punctuated by a pattern of withdrawals during which the narrator repeatedly retreats to the fringes of community" and states that this is indicative of the "isolation of the citizen from his/her community" (210). I contend, however, that the narrator is moving toward union with Dunnet Landing not only from the moment that she sees its coastline, but even before that moment, outside the confines of the text, in the moment when the narrator made the decision to return, even in the moment when the narrator came to Dunnet Landing for the first time. This is not regionalism as ascetic withdrawal, as Dowdell suggests, or a process of moving from alienation to union, as Goheen would have us believe, but instead a courtship ritual held between two deeply enamored parties; this is, in fact, a love story. Goheen's point about the unstable nature of that courtship is well taken, however; it is clear that, for some time in the narrative, the courtship is a halting one, filled with moments where the narrator advances and retreats, where the community opens its arms to her and then pushes her away. But the moment when this seems to culminate into a mutual embrace is, strangely enough, at the Bowden reunion in Chapter 18.

A great deal has been made about Jewett's text and about the Bowden reunion chapter in particular and its links to nineteenth century fears over what Holly Jackson calls "the end of American whiteness" (264). Jackson notes that "the decline of the white birthrate over the course of the nineteenth century induced panic that 'willfully sterile' white Americans would be outnumbered and overpowered by racial minorities" and that Edward A. Ross's term "race suicide" came to encapsulate that conjoinment of "anti-feminist and anti-immigrant ideologies" (265). Jackson also points out Elizabeth Ammons' assertion that the Bowden reunion scene itself is about "racial purity and white cultural dominance" (96). There is no question that this is rooted in an uncomfortable truth and that it highlights what Jackson notes as the text's portrayal of "the demands of white nationalism and feminism as conflicting and not easily recognizable" (273). My purpose here is not to serve as an apologist for the text's undoubted relationship with white nationalism. Instead, I hope to point out that, while considering a text by itself is often our default, this discussion is an excellent example of the limitations of doing so. I contend that much of the text's tendency to inflate the fears of "race suicide" are related to reading the text in isolation. When we practice the freak show close reading technique of reading the flaws in the text, and when we read it in conjunction with *Moby-Dick*, we can see that, like the freak show itself, it is a text that can function on two sides of a binary simultaneously. *The Country of the Pointed Firs* is an excellent example of a text that bridges the fluid maritime region and reveals stories of queer collective intimacy; it is also a text that engages in a larger project that may represent both nationalist and colonialist impulses as well as efforts to subvert them.

Just as *Moby-Dick* is a text often considered deficient in its depiction of the wholeness of women—a facet that Jewett's provides in detail—Jewett's text is missing the complex understanding of the horrors of whiteness that Melville adeptly captures. When understood as texts that bookend the seafaring era and when reading them together as texts that engage in the project of charting the maritime region's characteristics and perimeters, it is easier to see what these two texts do together: as bookends of the mid-to-late nineteenth century, an era defined by, among other things, profound and rapid change, movement from agrarianism to urbanization, the rise of technology and medicine, and, of course, the hyperbolic fear of the immigrant crisis, these books together present not the most base fears of a dying white America, but a cautionary tale. Melville's accurate depiction of whaling (despite its admittedly brutal capitalistic bent) as an industry that cultivated difference contrasts dramatically against Jewett's declining white coastal town. Not only do we note that the feature that destroys difference in Melville is the unquenchable rage of its white leader, but in Jewett's quiet village, we see what white communities are in danger of becoming without an infusion of new blood. While the narrator is far from someone who bears dramatic markers of difference, she is a queer oddity in Dunnet Landing, and the impact that she, someone whose primary difference is marked by class and urbanism, has on the community is a subtle hint of what those with more dramatic markers of difference could add to the village. The message when reading the two texts together is clear: racial purity must be sacrificed for the vitality that difference will bring.

The gaps and flaws inherent in each text do not disappear when read together; however, reading them in tandem does allow us a more nuanced reading of each. Indeed,

the pervasive poison of white nationalism that infuses the Bowden reunion scene often causes us to overlook the story of queer collective intimacy that still exists in the gaps. While we cannot—and should not—abandon the former reading of this scene, we must also acknowledge these parallel elements in order to have a more comprehensive picture of the project that Jewett is engaging in here. The Bowden reunion is the first scene, for example, where the narrator becomes not just an observer of other characters to whom she attributes mythical and ancient properties but also one herself: as the group walks along a path toward the field where the reunion is being held, she notes that "we might have been a company of ancient Greeks going to celebrate a victory, or to worship the god of harvests in the grove above" (101). This sense of intermingling continues when the group sits down to eat the feast; the narrator notes the Bowden's "inheritance of good taste and skill and a certain pleasing gift of formality. Something made them do all these things in a finer way than most country people would have done them" (106). Although this can certainly be read as more implicit endorsement of racial purity and superiority, it can also be read as a strong indicator of the narrator's absorption into the collective community: her discerning eye, which has thus far offered insightful and often dispassionate descriptions of her surroundings and people, has lost its edge. She has become inured to recognizing faults in the way that people often do when they begin to feel at home in a place and with a group.

The narrator's inclusion in the community becomes complete in Chapter 19, "The Feast's End." The pinnacle comes early, when Mrs. Todd and the narrator eat pie together: "Mrs. Todd helped me generously to the whole word Bowden, and consumed Reunion herself" (108). Although this sentence is brief, its meaning is freighted with

great meaning. Not only has the narrator joined the family reunion, allowed the glow of happiness to color her impressions, and eaten their food, she has consumed their very name; she has taken that name inside of herself, broken down its nutrients to use for fuel for her cells, and in a way, made it part of her forever. But in addition, Mrs. Todd has partaken of the same food, this time consuming the word "reunion." It is half of the phrase that the narrator has eaten. It is also no coincidence that this scene of two women surrounded by family, engaged in a celebration, feels like a commitment ceremony: each woman has eaten a bite of pie reminiscent of the way that brides and grooms feed one another.

But this action has even more freighted subtext. As Jean Rohloff notes, Mrs. Todd and the narrator are "eating their words": "there is the subtle enactment of the cannibalistic belief that to ingest one's enemy is to gain his power, as if by eating the symbolic language the women can overthrow the rule of the father" (39). And indeed they do: not only is this the ingesting of an equivalent to a wedding cake, but it is a form of communion - my body, broken for you. That nod to cannibalism, often glossed over in religious ceremony, in this instance holds both the ritual overtones of religion alongside the nineteenth century rhetorical connections between cannibalism and homosexuality. In this single sentence near the end of Jewett's text, in the midst of a celebration that is often accurately coded as a white nationalist event, we can clearly see the subtext and the subversion: this is also the joining together of two women in matrimony, both to one another and to the community they love, in a ceremony clearly affixed with the trappings of religious ritual. Although nowhere near as detailed, affectionate or effusive as Ishmael's characterization of his early marriage to Queequeg in *Moby-Dick*, it is just as

meaningful, and just as indicative of the novel's preservation of the stories of queer collective intimacy. This particular queer women's archive does not negate the white nationalist symbolism visible in the gaps and flaws of Jewett's text; scholars such as Louise Michele Newman remind us of the pervasive racist underpinnings of white womanhood and feminism in the nineteenth century, and scholars such as Jasbir Puar have discussed the sexual exceptionalism, or homonationalism, that is particular to white American queerness.[xiii] But it does force white womanhood, queerness, and nationalism to coexist in the text in complicated and uncomfortable ways that force us to reckon with the complicities of queerness even as we revel in its joy and autonomy.

The description immediately following the communion ritual between Mrs. Todd and the narrator is equally important:

> The most renowned essay in cookery on the tables was a model of the old Bowden house made of durable gingerbread, with all the windows and doors in the right places, and sprigs of genuine lilac set at the front…There was a general sigh when this fell into ruin at the feast's end, and it was shared by a great part of the assembly, not without seriousness, and as if it were a pledge and token of loyalty. (108)

What is most striking about this particular scene are again a few small but significant details. Holly Jackson contends that the "ravaged" family home is another indicator of the perils of white nationalism and is linked with familial decline. But I suggest that there's more at work here that speaks further to the tension that Jackson already noted between feminism and white nationalism and that asks us not to disregard the discomfiting overtones of racial superiority and fears of white decline in this scene,

but to understand that there may also be something subversive at work. Rather than focusing first on the house, I ask that we look at the lilacs by the door. Although F.O. Matthiessen suggests that Jewett is "the daughter of Hawthorne's style," I suggest that in this moment, she is pointing us elsewhere. Although not an herb, the mention of this flower has a specific subtext that draws the reader deep into the writing of the American Renaissance, although to different works than those by Hawthorne. This mention of lilacs first conjures up Thoreau's description in *Walden* of the crumbling houses he passes in the woods of a town that failed while Concord persisted:

> Still grows the vivacious lilac a generation after the door and lintel and the sill are gone, unfolding its sweet-scented flowers each spring, to be plucked by the musing traveller; planted and tended once by children's hands, in front-yard plots…the last of that stirp, sole survivor of that family. Little did the dusky children think that the puny slip…would root itself so, and outlive them…and tell their story faintly to the lone wanderer a half-century after they had grown up and died. (248)

Thoreau's digression here suggests not the erasure of family lineage, but instead its persistence. Even under the direst of circumstances, what the family has touched it has influenced, and it lives on. The flower planted by the family "tell(s) their story faintly" to anyone who will pass; its inclusion by Jewett marks this not as a scene of familial dissolution, but of familial persistence long past the material trappings of society and culture have eroded away.

The second moment that is conjured up by this mention of lilacs is, of course, Whitman's famous poem: "When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom'd." The opening stanza of the poem paints a clear picture of its relevance to Jewett's work:

> When lilacs last in the dooryard bloom'd,
>
> And the great star early droop'd in the western sky in the night,
>
> I mourn'd, and yet shall mourn with ever-returning spring.
>
> Ever-returning spring, trinity sure to me you bring,
>
> Lilac blooming perennial and drooping star in the west,
>
> And thought of him I love.

Whitman's lilacs "in the dooryard" and Jewett's "sprigs of genuine lilac set at the front" are kith and kin; both call up the "perennial" nature of family and memory, especially when read in conjunction with Thoreau's work. But Whitman's adds another layer: the persistence of grief after the loss of a loved one. It is interesting that the loved one that Whitman references is Lincoln, whose towering historical presence inserted into a scene rife with the subtext of white nationalism disrupts and unsettles those conclusions. When we return to the scene's end, watching the gingerbread house fall to ruin becomes less a moment of race panic and the witnessing of familial dissolution, but instead a somber recognition of the impermanence of physical family and the simultaneous acknowledgement that family, and, in essence, the kind of community that exists in Dunnet Landing, is a pledge, a bond that persists beyond loss, grief, and absence. Thus, when the narrator leaves at the novel's end and "Dunnet Landing and all its coasts were lost to sight" (131), we know that this departure does not have the power

to disrupt the lure of the maritime region or to sever the bonds of queer collective intimacy that tie her to Dunnet Landing and its people.

It is a scene like this one that illustrates Jewett's masterful depiction of the maritime region and its revelations of the stories of queer collective intimacy. The Fejee mermaid, with its fluid provenance and its archive of possible origin stories, proves an adept model for examining texts such as Jewett's. It is through examples like this one that we can see the power of the liberatory archive at work: in addition to the stories of her characters, by populating her novel with representations that were significant in popular mid-nineteenth century American Renaissance texts, she archives those texts within her own as well. She also gives further credence to this chapter's claims that, despite the late-nineteenth century publication date of *The Country of the Pointed Firs*, its enduring connection to a text produced in 1851 is both clear and significant. Jewett, of course, is not alone; Melville's text is also structured as an arm of the liberatory archive and as an invitation. By creating a gap and opening the door for another writer to continue to chart the scope, population and landscape of the maritime region, Melville encourages us to read his sprawling novel as the beginning of a larger narrative, one that spans the era of seafaring from its height to its decline. It also encourages us to see both Melville and Jewett's vision of the project of literature as partnered rather than singular. Despite their reputations as insular—Melville's as a text solely devoted to depicting the story of the Pequod and Jewett's as depicting the isolated village of Dunnet Landing—when paired, the two texts become not finished narratives, but open-ended ones, inviting continued connections with other writers and other works. When it comes to modeling the freak show analytical technique in literature and to depicting liberatory archive at work, this

partnership is a fruitful one: *Moby-Dick* and *The Country of the Pointed Firs* together suggest writing is itself part of the process of archive rather than a vehicle to create a permanent textual object.

[viii] This edition is part of the P.T. Barnum papers, MssCol 215 b, at The New York Public Library's Rare Books and Manuscripts Division. The newspaper referenced had an 1843 date on an interior page but no more specific date listed. To see a photo of this image, included with the permission of the NYPL, please see Appendix A.

[ix] Ibid.

[x] Although circulation numbers for *The Charleston Mercury* in 1843 are hard to come by, Charles G. Steffen comments on the larger trends at work in newspaper circulation in early America. By 1821, the U.S. had approximately 350,000 subscribers and about 1.5 million people were readers; one in seven Americans was estimated to be reading for free (382). By the 1830s and 40s, the penny press was on the rise, and this trend combined with the rise in the steam-powered cylinder press and the government policy of subsidizing newspapers contributed to a dramatic rise in the growth of newspaper circulation before the Civil War (384).

[xi] Jan Bondeson notes in *The Fejee Mermaid and Other Essays in Natural and Unnatural History* that Barnum leased the curiosity in the early 1840s and used it to launch his New York-based museum. He created a Dr. Griffin of the fictional London Lyceum of Natural History and said that Griffin was bringing the mermaid with him to display in America. His longtime assistant, Levi Lyman, masqueraded as the fictional Dr. Griffin for a group of reporters. Lyman's playacting inspired a series of newspaper stories in Philadelphia and New York, which drummed up the interests of the public and the ire of scientists and doctors who were skeptical of the mermaid's authenticity. No matter the skepticism, Barnum made a great deal of money on the attraction before New Yorkers "tired" of it in 1843, which was when he sent it traveling on a tour of the southern United States (51-53).

[xii] It is important to note at this point that although I often attribute the same descriptions to performers and objects here, it is not because I believe them deserving of the same treatment. I do so because Barnum and others in charge of freak show operations often used the same identifiers and descriptions for performers and exhibition objects alike, both in day-to-day operation (ballyhoo) and in promotional texts. I do not claim here that the Fejee mermaid is in any way representative of the diverse and disparate experiences of freak show performers; instead, I chose this text primarily because the ad itself (not the object it describes) functions as an adept analytical model for my chapter's argument. The lived experiences and histories of freak show performers are valued and invaluable to me, and they will be explored in more detail in later chapters.

[xiii] See Newman's White Women's Rights: The Racial Origins of Feminism in the United States and Puar's *Terrorist Assemblages: Homonationalism in Queer Times.*

CHAPTER 3. "The Construction of the Effect": Narrative Rupture, The Reinterpretation of Frame Narrative, and the Archive of Slavery and Disabled Autonomy in *Pudd'nhead Wilson* and *Those Extraordinary Twins*

Introduction

In his 1924 text about Vaudeville comedians, Felix Isman recounts the "ballyhoo" of a "lean, black-haired, steely-blue-eyed young man" who enticed passerby on the streets of Boston in the late 1880s:

> All for the insignificant sum of one dime, two nickels, ten coppers, one-tenth part of a dollar—the price of a shave or a hair ribbon!…The greatest, most astounding aggregation of marvels and monstrosities ever gathered together in one edifice. Looted from the ends of the earth. From the wilds of darkest African, the miasmic jungles of Brazil, the mystic headwaters of the Yan-tse Kiang, the cannibal isles of the Antipodes, the frosty slopes of the Himalayas, and the barren steppes of the Caucasus! Sparing no expense, every town, every village, every hamlet, every nook and cranny of the globe has been searched with a fine-toothed comb to provide this feast for the eye and mind. A refined exhibition for cultured ladies and gentlemen. No waiting, no delays. Step up, ladies and gentlemen, and avoid the rush! Tickets now selling in the doorway! (79)

The ballyhoo is, in many ways, a masterful example of the showman's craft, but it also is a prime example of the freak show's deception. Isman calls the young man and his ballyhoo a "violation" and the accompanying circus and freak show an "assault and battery upon the eyes of all who passed" (80) and Robert Bogdan notes that this oration and others like it were intended to "attract the crowd, to grab attention with their

modulating voices and slick talk" (94). That slick talk, asserts Bogdan, was part of "an elaborate system of promoting and presenting" the freak show performers which, in conjunction with the advance couriers that circulated in a community prior to the arrival of the freak show, helped to create for the performer "a public identity, a presentation, a front, that would have the widest appeal, attract the most people, collect the most dimes" (95). In essence, the freak show barker was the enticer and his words the lure: in conjunction with the aforementioned promotional materials, the barker manufactured the allure that drew visitors inside the freak show tent.

In addition to emphasizing the freak show's insignificant cost, the barker noted that the "marvels and monstrosities" gathered together had been collected from a vast number of continents, from every "nook and cranny" of the world. The collection is being presented rhetorically to the potential audience as an archive of the world's oddest attractions, a "feast for the eye and mind" that has been pulled out at the root from its areas of origin, separated like a comb separates hair in order to put the collection into a new kind of logical, coherent order. This kind of rhetorical and narrative titillation is both problematic and persuasive: problematic because it clearly saps the performers' autonomy to craft their own public narrative, and persuasive in the way in which it assembles the disparate performers and attempts to categorize them. The "marvels and monstrosities" in all their varieties, are gathered together in an expansive classification category into which virtually any human being who deviates from Quetelet's "average man" could fall.[xiv]

Ethics aside,[xv] establishing an expansive mode of classification is one of the more masterful skills possessed by freak show barkers; because that classification category suggests a great deal but reveals little, visitors to the freak show could still be surprised

by what they might find inside. Although this certainly does not erase the exploitative connotations of the barker's control over the public narrative of freak show performers, from a purely capitalistic frame of reference, monolithic categorization becomes a material boon. By broadening the narrative, the barker ensured that a steady stream of visitors looking for a variety of forms of entertainment would enter the tent, which meant that the performers would make more money than they might have if the narrative were highly specific.

However, that lack of specificity only served as an introductory lure. If what was inside the tent was not monstrous or marvelous enough, it would not hold the attention of the audience. Thus, the monolithic categorization was only effective temporarily and only as an enticement for more information. What's also notable in the scenario that Isman outlines is that it serves as a reminder of the autonomy that the barkers were afforded to craft a titillating narrative about the living archive inside the tent, an archive—and a narrative—that had to be broken apart and rebuilt anew each time the freak show arrived in a town. The narrative also had to be ruptured and rebuilt each time a new performer was added to the collection, or each time a performer decided to change their freakish presentation; Robert Bogdan notes that sometimes the mode of presentation shifted "to fit the changing characteristics of the person or the society." In other cases, performers adopted different identities as they aged or adopted a "mixed-mode" presentation based on encouraging audience interested from incongruity (114-115). The barker's inventiveness, then, was akin to that of a master storyteller, one who continually reinvents the narrative as a form of enticement.

But because the barker's narrative is inevitably tied to the rhetorical articulation and display of the freak, it simultaneously becomes a taxonomy: one that attempts to classify deviant bodies into an orderly system that the average American citizen could relate to rather than merely gawk at. Classification, after all, is an effective method of suturing together what seems wholly disparate in order to make better sense of it. The manufacture of the freak frame narrative was multifaceted work: in many cases exploitative, but simultaneously the essential work of classification and archival collection of marginal lives and experiences, many of which would have vanished without historical note had the freak show not gathered and recorded them. All of that work was aggregated by the ballyhoo, the overarching narrative frame utilized by the barker.

The only constant in the freak show, then, was its propensity for change, all of which hinged upon its pool of performers. As a result, the ballyhoo's effectiveness was built around and dependent upon the idea of sustained narrative rupture within its boundaries: the constant unsettling of the story, its consistent evolution and newness, and the constant reorganizing of the participants in order to tell the most enticing story possible. The barker's control of the narrative, like the performers themselves, was an illusion; his narrative was at the mercy of the band of performers that happened to comprise the show at any given moment.

In this chapter, I argue that the freak show's ballyhoo offers yet another example of how the freak show and its texts model how to read the gaps and flaws in literature to find the stories of those on the margins and thus evidence of the existence of the liberatory archive. In this case, I argue that the fundamental gap or flaw in the frame

narrative of the freak show ballyhoo—its reliance on narrative rupture—provides a model for reading narrative rupture in frame narratives of literary texts of the period. The texts I've chosen to study for this chapter are ones whose fractured nature has long been a source of fascination and consternation for critics focused on late nineteenth century literature: Mark Twain's strange and oft-studied 1894 novel, *Pudd'nhead Wilson*, and *Those Extraordinary Twins*, the darkly comic short story that is classified as the novel's child. The novel and the excised short story, which are most often bound and read together and which typically feature an essay sandwiched between them, have long been classified as problematic by scholars and readers alike, in great part because the novel is considered by many to be a structural and critical failure and the short story is considered unintelligible without its parent novel. While many critics have probed this novel and its excised short story, citing this inability to suture the two together effectively as evidence of the failure of both as texts, I contend that if we apply the model of the ballyhoo's ruptured frame narrative as an assistive analytical tool to read the gaps and flaws—the obfuscations, the elisions, the things they leaves unsaid or the things that are missing, what they suggest rather than state outright—in this text, both the text's successes and failures become more visible.

The key to this close reading is Twain's essay. It has not had much scholarly attention devoted to it save the routine mention of its single, memorable line,[xvi] but because it attempts to explain the narrative rupture between the two texts, it follows the model of the freak show ballyhoo and provides a frame narrative for reading the texts. Also like the ballyhoo, however, the frame narrative is ruptured again and again through analysis of the gaps and flaws in the text as a whole, which brings to light the

simultaneous stories of the legacy of slavery and the lived experience of disability archived within them. Just as the freak show barker is forced to continually fracture the narratives of freak show performers within his larger frame and rebuild the ballyhoo to account for performer diversity and in order to entice his audience, so too does Twain's craft essay frame his attempts to articulate America's fracture under the weight of slavery as well as his simultaneous critique of the rupturing effect of dominant white culture on bodies of difference.

When interpreted as a frame narrative using the model provided by the freak show ballyhoo, the inventive leaps in Twain's text also become more apparent: this model of close reading illuminates the growing rift and ultimate dismemberment of the text's conjoined twins, which can be read as a stand-in for a pattern of national fracture and in particular, as Robert Pierce Forbes notes, "how deeply intertwined the destiny of the nation was with the problem of slavery" (4). Twain's project also highlights how those events enshrined a legacy of brokenness, codified by its violent origins, perpetuated by the violence of slavery and by its continued attempts to dominate and control of bodies of difference. And yet just as Twain's essay provides an allegorical rendering of racial struggle and the moments of rupture that represent it, Twain's companion story manages to provide a depiction of the kind of contradictory culture that develops in the real gaps in the fiction of national coherence: *Those Extraordinary Twins* highlights the freakishness of the white residents of Dawson's Landing and provides a space where the conjoined twins are allowed a measure of autonomous and human representation that is often overlooked by critics.

When read together and with the assistance of the freak show close reading model, Twain's texts illustrate how frame narrative functions not just as a literary taxonomy, but as a mechanism of the liberatory archive, one that unflinchingly enshrines realistic stories of disabled lives and illuminates the effect that the United States' legacy of slavery has had a lasting effect on black bodies, on disabled bodies, and on the structure and behavior of American narrative.

The Frame Narrative

Frame narratives, sometimes referred to as "narrative embedding,"[xvii] first appeared by most accounts in the nineteenth century, but scholars such as Amanda J. Gerber make the case that collections of embedded tales exist as far back as Ovid's *Metamorphosis*, *Thousand and One Nights*, and the *Decameron*. Despite its lengthy history and impressive genealogy, what Gerber calls the genre of frame narration can prove to be a slippery category for discussion in literary studies because it "often resists description owing to its capacity to encapsulate a multitude of genres within its frame, its centuries of use, and its various cultural applications" (3).

A number of scholars have discussed both the frame narrative's history and its varying function in literature. Daniel Southward writes of the found manuscript, and by extension the frame narrative as endemic to early Gothic literature, as "critically neglected" (45) and as a signal of a kind of anxiety present in the period. Charlotte Szilagyi writes of the ways in which "framing defines the Other" (iii, 4), particularly at the intersection of ethnic and narrative framing, which she contends have a causal

relationship. Bertram Ashe discusses the use of frame by African American writers as a "medium for negotiation with their readership" and as a "site of memory" (2).

Kathleen Wall points out that the relationship between stories and their frames is itself often difficult to classify, which may be at least in part why they have the kind of genre-crossing capabilities that Gerber notes. On one hand, notes Wall, "because the frame is both the first and the last point of contact for the reader, and because its strategies are to establish both the authority of the text and the relationship with the reader or narratee, frame narratives possess a kind of authoritative verisimilar and psychological weight." On the other hand, she states, frames are also considered peripheral to the core of the narrative, which means that "texts that make use of frame narratives can be used to question what is marginal and what is central" (186).

For the purposes of my argument, I am most interested in Ashe's identification of frame narrative as a site of memory and Wall's observation that frames are peripheral and can be used to question what is central. In the case of Twain's text, when read using the ballyhoo model, I contend that frame narrative operates as an archive of the legacy of slavery where the story of what is central is constantly unsettled.

The Roots of Twain's Strange Project

Before we apply the freak show ballyhoo model as a close reading analytical tool to Twain's text, however, it's important to revisit what about it has troubled scholars so. Critics have long been conflicted over how to read Twain's novel. In fact, critics have often been at odds over how to read Twain himself. Van Wyck Brooks, for example, noted in 1922 that Twain's pessimism was indicative of "some deep malady of the soul"

and that it signified that there was "something gravely amiss with his inner life" (para. 14.). George Toles suggests that Twain's pessimism, particularly surrounding the creation of *Pudd'nhead Wilson*, was rooted in the Panic of 1893 and the subsequent bankruptcy that faced his firm in 1894 (57). Hershel Parker and Henry Binder note that the manuscript is rife with "unreconciled contradictions" and that it has a gaudy, dazzling ending that seems separate from the remainder of the text (142). Susan Gillman call the text Twain's "dark twin" (89), and similarly, Beverly Hume talks of how the "original" from which the stories are pulled is Twain himself (92). And yet others such as Leslie Fiedler and F.R. Leavis[xviii] have long classified the text as one of the most extraordinary in American literature.

Still, much of the scholarship related to *Pudd'nhead Wilson* and *Those Extraordinary Twins* focuses less on the short story and more on what Dorothy Berkson calls the two-headedness (309) of the longer novel, particularly its incoherent structure, the novel's vacillation between farce and tragedy, and the lost threads of characterization that seem to appear and disappear from chapter to chapter. Some critics attribute the novel's strangeness to the powerful metamorphosis it undergoes throughout the two years during which Twain wrote it.[xix] Others suggest that its oddness is primarily attributable to Twain's dependence on inspiration to construct his narrative and his undisciplined writing style (Berkson 309). And while a number of critics have talked about the strangeness of Twain's structure and its inelegant results, most discuss its structure through the lens of metaphor: critics such as Cynthia Wu, Catherine O'Connell, and Susan Gillman[xx] have all variously suggested that Twain's use of conjoined twins served to represent a nation struggling for unity in the midst of a period of unquestionable

difference, which although certainly applicable because of Twain's own metaphorical usage of the conjoined body, is also a critical approach that veers into ableism. What few critics discuss, however, is how Twain's entire project - the short essay, the strange short story that he extracts from *Puddn'head Wilson*, and the novel itself - may in fact all be working exactly as Twain intended.

I contend that, much like the freak show ballyhoo model, Twain is utilizing nonfiction as a frame narrative for his fictional text, first and foremost as a kind of narrative defense for a text largely considered to be a failure. In the introduction to *Those Extraordinary Twins*, Twain's attempts to explain his flawed, incomplete novel and its originary story are often read as a legitimate explanation for his writing process. But in Twain's hands, the essay changes our understanding of how frame narrative can work: not just as a form of defense, but as ballyhoo, a narrative rupture and retelling that both titillates and attempts to shore up inconsistencies and problematic material. Twain's attempt at suture here tends toward the cultural. His explanation for the unfinishedness of his novel and the extracted short story tries to do the work that the fiction could not: it uses the rhetoric of doubling, conjoining, and hybridity to try to bind together the cultural wound that slavery left behind by imagining and then representing his novel and its excised story as a conjoined body.

Because there is considerable scholarship devoted to *Puddn'head Wilson* alone, I will be devoting my discussion in this chapter to the other two elements of Twain's project: the essay and the extracted short story, which are always presented together with the original novel in print form. In essence, I argue that the structural work that Twain performs in his essay is twofold. The first is that the essay functions as what Joseph B.

McCullough and Donald Malcolm call an "antecedent" to *Letters from the Earth* and as another of Twain's creation myths (168): in this case, as a veiled allegorical retelling of slavery's continuing rupture of the United States told through the lens of artistic struggle and the conjoined body. The second is that Twain's craft essay becomes a new lens through which to read *Pudd'nhead Wilson* that uses the complex - and deeply problematic - metaphor of the conjoined body to illustrate the fracture of the nation. Similarly, the short story *Those Extraordinary Twins* also has a twofold function: it imbues the freak with normalcy, and it simultaneously points out that what is abnormal and fundamentally pathological in Dawson's Landing are the rigid rules and standards impressed upon bodies of difference by dominant culture. When examined in conjunction with one another, this reading of the essay alongside the reading of *Those Extraordinary Twins* helps to alter our interpretation of Twain's collective narrative project from convoluted mess to deeply flawed masterpiece. When read together, with the assistance of the freak show close reading model, Twain's texts illustrate how frame narrative functions not just as a literary taxonomy, but as a mechanism that illustrates the presence of the liberatory archive in *Pudd'nhead Wilson*: an archive that unflinchingly enshrines realistic stories of lived disability and an acknowledgement of how the United States' legacy of slavery has had a profound and lasting effect on black bodies, on disabled bodies, on nation, and, of course, on the structure and behavior of American narrative.

Twain's Strange Essay as Ballyhoo

As I mentioned in brief earlier in this chapter, Twain's satirical retelling of the founding of the American nation masquerades as an essay on craft that frames two pieces

of fiction: *Those Extraordinary Twins* and *Puddn'head Wilson*. In many current printings, including the one utilized for this reading, the essay appears right in the middle of the text: right after *Puddn'head Wilson* and just before the beginning of *Those Extraordinary Twins*. It is a short text, just a few pages long, but within that brief page count, the essay does considerable work. The text begins with what seems to be Twain's humble commentary on his lack of novel-writing ability: "a man who is not born with the novel-writing gift has a troublesome time of it when he tries to build a novel," he states. "I know this from experience." He continues:

> He has no clear idea of his story; in fact he has no story. He merely has some people in his mind, and an incident or two, also a locality. He knows these people, he knows the selected locality, and he trusts that he can plunge those people into those incidents with interesting results. So he goes to work. (229)

It is clear that Twain is in part crafting an essay about his writing style and attempting to be self-deprecating about his capabilities. But there are also clear signifiers within the very first sentence alone that intimate that Twain is discussing more than simply the writing of a novel. The first indication is his claim that he was "not born with the novel-writing gift" and that that fact is "troublesome" for someone like him. By 1894, Twain had written seven novels; while he may not have been "born with a gift," he had already clearly proven adept at the form. This attempt to undersell his skills at this point in his career has the ring of false modesty. The second indication is his use of the phrase "build a novel." While a novel is certainly sometimes discussed as a process of construction, the phrase itself rings slightly false; it sounds more consistent with late-twentieth century discussions of the novel-writing process. By choosing to begin an essay

on craft with an undercutting of his writing ability and by referring to the writing process as a constructive process rather than a creative one, Twain forces us to read the gaps and flaws in the text. What we find is that this commentary on craft is referencing something more than craft alone.

In fact, in these first few sentences, there is a clear parallel between Twain's interpretation of power, control, and dominance and his later introduction to "Letters to the Earth," where the Creator sits on his throne and considers the creation of space, time, and all living beings. The parallel I draw here is more substantial than just rhetorical or semantic, however. While "Letters" was written later than *Pudd'nhead Wilson*—in 1904-1909 versus 1894—both texts were written during periods when Twain was experiencing remarkably similar financial and emotional distress. As Reuben Sanchez notes, at the end of the 1880s after completing "A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court," Twain invested a great deal of money in the Paige typesetting machine. In fact, he believed it would make him so wealthy that he became the sole backer of James. W. Paige, but the machine was a failure, so he lost a great deal of money. That loss combined with the failure of Charles L. Webster and Company, of which Twain was part owner, lead to his bankruptcy in 1894 - the very period during which *Puddn'head Wilson* was written and published. Although Twain embarked on a world tour to help pay off his debts, Sanchez notes that period of financial struggle and decline recurred in the last decade of his life (19). Arthur Gelb points out that during the composition of "Letters," Twain was again deeply in debt and he had also lost his wife and one of his daughters.[xxi] When read through the lens of historical context, Twain's language and perspective in the

introduction to this essay, then, function not only as the start of a craft essay, but as a narrative echo of later work and as a method of hiding his personal pain within the text.

Biographical parallel in the creation periods of two works, however, only indicates a loose correlation between those two works; this correlation also doesn't dictate the focus on Twain's essay. Instead, there's evidence that Twain's essay, in its very particular set of gaps and flaws, is archiving the distinct history of the United States into this text. The language Twain uses in "Letters to the Earth" is explicit about the power of world creation; in the essay, however, Twain's subtle signal in his first sentence establishes the foundation of an allegory about national strife. What Twain is hinting at in this text is not the creation of the universe by an all-knowing God, but the creation, or re-creation, of a nation by human beings.

If we return to the opening lines of Twain's essay, he begins with a description of how story is often initially elusive and how the idea often begins with a set of loosely associated elements: "no story," but instead people, "an incident or two," a "locality," and then "plunging" into them "with interesting results." This, of course, can be read as a direct parallel to the model of the ballyhoo referenced in the opening of this chapter; like freak show performers, the characters in Twain's text are loosely gathered together without an established narrative; that narrative must be "built" by the barker or writer. While this reads as a nod to ballyhoo and as a relatively straightforward craft essay, the language signifiers in his first sentence also now suggest to the reader that the description of novel construction should be examined more carefully for additional meaning. I argue that the essay can be read both as craft essay and as an allegory about the American nation fractured by slavery and the resulting Civil War.

Allegory is the perfect vehicle to deliver this message; it is also the perfect mechanism for the purposes of my argument because of its focus on using a story to communicate a hidden message. This makes it conducive to reading using the freak show model of reading gaps and flaws in texts. Cindy Weinstein notes that Twain's usage of allegory has precedent: according to Sanchez, she also reads "A Connecticut Yankee" as an allegory of American labor (129). While Weinstein gravitates to reading nineteenth-century allegorical usage as being critiqued on the same grounds as mechanized labor, she also lends credence to the function of the allegorical narrative in nineteenth-century work. Extending Weinstein's reading of allegory from Yankee to *Pudd'nhead Wilson* is a natural one, especially since while Twain doesn't refer to mechanized labor in particular in this text, his attempts to systematize an explanation of the creative process in a craft essay is a direct enactment of the very labor that Weinstein references herself.

Twain's allegory of the re-construction of a nation after a rupture next notes that novel-writing is not the original intent of story. The original intention, he notes, is to "only tell a little tale" but the tale eventually spreads itself into a book. Before "the short tale grows into a long tale," he writes, "the original intention (or motif) is apt to get abolished and find itself superseded by a quite different one" (229). As Twain's allegory demonstrates, story is as different from novel as the antebellum United States is from its postbellum self. Just as a story can eventually spread itself into a book, the anger and discontent over the use of enslaved people as labor eventually expanded into a nation-fracturing war and the subsequent process of Reconstruction. W.E.B. DuBois roots this clearly in the "ultimate exploited" black worker who was the "founding stone of the new economic system in the nineteenth century and for the modern world...he was (the war's)

underlying cause" (12). Like the intentions of a story, once that stone was moved, the entire national narrative was forced to change.

Twain next notes that this same pattern had already played out in a previous piece; he states "it was so in the case of a magazine sketch which I once started to write - a funny and fantastic sketch about a prince and a pauper; it presently assumed a grave cast of its own accord, and in that new shape spread itself out into a book. Much the same thing happened with *Pudd'nhead Wilson*" (229). Twain's utilization of *The Prince and the Pauper* here bolsters the essay's credentials as an essay on craft by using a specific example, but *The Prince and the Pauper* also serves a particular function here: both *The Prince and the Pauper* and *Pudd'nhead Wilson* feature at their heart a switch of identities between two children in vastly different economic positions. Although constitutional republics and monarchies are unquestionably different political structures, it is still easy to visualize the economic and cultural parallel that Twain was making between Britain under Henry VIII and the slaveholding Missouri town of Dawson's Landing in the 1830s: both systems were ruled by a white elite dependent upon a subservient underclass, and both systems were ripe for rupture.

Twain uses *The Prince and The Pauper*'s brief mention deftly, infusing it with historical resonance and archiving the text and its historical connections within the frame of the essay. The brief usage also allows it to function as a transitional or "hinge" text: it also allows Twain to shift discussion to the construction of his primary text, *Pudd'nhead Wilson*. That discussion quickly takes a somber turn: Twain indicates that he had a "sufficiently hard time" with the novel because "it changed itself from a farce to a tragedy while I was going along with it - a most embarrassing circumstance" (229). If we

continue to treat this text as Twain's complex allegory on the rupture of a nation by its reliance on slavery here, there is a great deal of deft historical commentary wrapped up in that brief statement that must be unpacked. That phrase then can be read as a commentary on the United States' relationship to democracy under the influence of the institution of slavery. The shift from farce to tragedy is clear: the nation proclaiming democracy that was constructed on the backs of slaves was also then ruptured by the battles over them. Those battles also certainly didn't end with the Emancipation Proclamation in 1863 or with the end of the war in 1865.[xxii] As Eric Foner notes in his review of scholarship about Reconstruction early in his monograph about the subject, Reconstruction was neither conservative nor confined by periodization: in addition to being a time of "radical change" it was also a process that "took the nation fully a century to implement its most basic demands, while others are yet to be fulfilled" (xxi). It's clear why the model of the freak show at large and the ballyhoo specifically is such a potent analytical tool for analyzing Twain's text and the legacy of slavery he's archived there: because it teaches us to read the gaps and flaws, we become used to a changing narrative landscape and adaptable to reading and interpreting those changes over time.

Twain's focus on the move from farce to tragedy intensified in the next line of his text, which shifts from genric concerns to a discussion of the nature of structure: "But what was a great deal worse was, that it was not one story, but two stories tangled together, and they obstructed and interrupted each other at every turn and created no end of confusion and annoyance" (229). Up to this point, Twain's rhetorical work has been the nature of sleight of hand: by building allegory sentence by sentence and layer by layer, Twain merely suggests the concept of conjoinment between slavery and the United

States. This sentence, however, is the first explicit semantic statement of conjoinment, and it changes the nature of the text's message. By describing his writing this way, Twain is pulling his own written work into the barker's frame. He transitions rhetorically from using the language of the ballyhoo to model his approach to instead casting his own work as a perfomer in the freak show that the ballyhoo describes. The description that Twain uses here of two stories tangled together, and later, on page 230, of "two stories in one," is presented as a succinct explanation of a problem in writing craft, but also functions again as a keen allegory. As a result, it archives the fragmentary nature of the U.S. under slavery while simultaneously parsing an articulation of disability from the text, one that is sometimes problematic, from the text in ways that move beyond representation.

The figure of the conjoined body that Twain uses here would have also had specific reverberations for his late nineteenth-century audience. Certainly, it would have conjured up for them the image of the freak show and perhaps the images of freaks on the carte-de-visite that were in the photo albums in their own living rooms.[xxiii] Although Twain explicitly references another set of conjoined twins, Giacomo and Giovanni Battista Tocci,[xxiv] later in this text, readers would also have heard the echoes in form and content of Twain's "Personal Habits of the Siamese Twins," a comic sketch first published in *Packard's Monthly* in August 1869, which recounts an encounter with and observation of Chang and Eng Bunker, the original Siamese twins. Throughout the *Packard's Monthly* essay, Twain presents the twins as connected but also as diametrically opposed, to the extent that he depicts them as fighting on opposite sides of Civil War: one fighting for the Union side and one on the Confederate. This farcical image of conjoined brothers fighting on opposite sides of the war—not just brother against brother, but

brothers sharing the same body, the line joining a fractured nation striking right down the middle of a conjoined body—is in fact, I argue, just the image that Twain wants to populate the reader's mind when they read this description and just the parallel he wants readers to make.

But this line, with Chang on one side and Eng on the other, did not actually begin with the division between the North and South during the Civil War, and its fracture represents more than just a nation that even in the late nineteenth century was fractured by the legacy of the institution of slavery. It also represents the nation's internal rupture in its reversal from earlier policy that viewed the Missouri Compromise as the only way to salvage the union. As Robert Pierce Forbes notes, the first line of fracture began with the "line of demarcation" established between slave and free states, "which came to seem such a fundamental, almost natural, fact of American political and social life that it grew difficult to recall how bitterly its institution had been contested and what a profound departure from earlier policy on slavery it had seemed to represent" (3). By utilizing the body of conjoined twins both to represent his novel and to allegorize the nation, Twain suggests a profound understanding of how deeply-rooted the issue of rupture was to the very nature of the American Union and how profoundly the institution of slavery represented a tangible manifestation of that pattern and history of national rupture. The corporeal metaphor in Twain's text lends credence to Forbes's contention that the Missouri Compromise didn't create the rupture itself: it merely legislated it. And still, as we consider this argument, it draws our attention as well to the very similar structure of Twain's text: this essay, marked in its layered allegorization of the nation, which strikes

straight through the middle of the novel and the short story as a visual reminder in form of the very rupture he's thematically suggesting.

Neither is it an accident that the image of a line dividing a disabled, racialized body also conjures up Frederick Douglass's 1881 essay "The Color Line" on the subject of American race relations in the *North American Review* and also foreshadows W.E.B. DuBois' famous use of the term in *The Souls of Black Folk*. Rather than illuminating the chaotic disorganization of his writing, Twain is in fact using this examination of his writing process as an opportunity to construct a subtle allegory that archives the story of America's contradictory embrace of slavery and the continued rift that that embrace has caused the nation.

Twain's discussion of conjoinment and the ensuing ramifications of fracture then becomes more explicit. The discovery of the "two stories in one," he notes, took him months to discover: "I carried the manuscript back and forth across the Atlantic two or three times, and read it and studied over it on shipboard" (230) he writes. While traveling by ship was indeed the only mode of travel for crossing the Atlantic, the ferrying of the manuscript serves a dual purpose here. Just as Twain uses the body of Chang and Eng as a vehicle onto which he can impress the Civil War so that the twins' body can serve as a signifier of national rupture, Twain's ferrying of the manuscript back and forth impresses the path of the transatlantic slave trade and the bodies of millions of the enslaved directly onto his manuscript. The manuscript becomes a place wherein the legacy of slavery becomes archived not by accident, but with intent.

It is this traveling, in fact, that Twain points out as illuminating the root cause of his manuscript's problem and his only solution: "I pulled one of the stories out by the

roots, and left the other one - a kind of literary Caesarean operation" (230). This sentence is the one most often quoted from this brief essay, in great part because its gruesomeness doesn't naturally lend itself to the subject matter. Speaking of a section of a narrative as something that needs to be pulled out through a surgical process is jarring. But Catherine O'Connell notes that not only is the phrase jarring, it is also imprecise. She notes that "an immediate problem with this metaphor is that 'the farce'…could not be extracted intact; while it is possible (although limiting) to read *Pudd'nhead Wilson* alone, *Those Extraordinary Twins* is incomprehensible without 'its parent.' A better metaphor, then, would be the (unsuccessful) separation of conjoined twins, a procedure that Twain in fact enacts in the first section of the novel" (101).

Why, then, does Twain utilize this jarring and wholly imprecise metaphor to refer to what is, in fact, the separation of conjoined storylines? I'd argue that the metaphor, although seemingly ill-fitting, actually reinforces Twain's allegory in several ways. First, it acts as a retelling of the farce and tragedy of America's allegiance to slavery and its resulting rupture, which runs counter to the narratives of national coherence cultivated by in the late nineteenth century. By conjuring up the image of medicalized childbirth rather than simply reference a surgical separation of two conjoined storylines, which has been his corporeal focus up to this point, Twain reminds his readers of the inextricable connections in his allegory's origins, of the near impossibility of a nation forged by slavery to excise slavery completely. In addition, the "literary Caesarian" and the extension of the metaphor is also is an explicit nod to the model of the freak show ballyhoo: the mother's body becomes a frame for the body of the excised child. Finally, the metaphor also reenacts the secession of the Southern states and suggests that, like the

two stories he's describing, the North and the South are so economically and ideologically different that they never belonged together in one body in the first place.

But these metaphors of story as bodies and as the recipients of bodily trauma also intimates other historical descriptions of the body that have been linked specifically to the national body. Antoine de Baecque, for example, discusses this at length in his history of the French Revolution. De Baecque notes that metaphor of the body as a symbol of the Revolution is a tool that "allow the tale of the Revolution to take shape and to happen in the mind of writers and of readers" (2). De Baecque notes three forms of political, bodily representation in the "body of history": the body an anthropomorphic representation of the political system; the body as a tool of discourse for persuasion; and the spectacle of the body evolving into political transparency. While metaphor can certainly function as a stand-in for analysis or complex thought, I do not believe that is the case with Twain. I suggest that Twain's use of the body aligns with de Baecque's conception of the body as representation of the political system forces the reader to analyze the body as political system in more depth.

To that end, it's important to note that Twain's decision to use the body of conjoined twins as a metaphor for national fracture is both effective and deeply problematic. Twain is by no means the only writer to do this. As Cynthia Wu points out, disabled bodies have long been used in literature "as objects of pity, scorn, fear, or disgust that function as narrative devices instead of complex, multidimensional characters" (35). While I argue here that Twain's use of the conjoined body as metaphor in this essay is clearly intentional and, in places, quite deft, it is also clear this utilization of the conjoined body, particularly the conjoined body of Chang and Eng Bunker, is

intended to incite the reader's fear and disgust. And yet, within that spectrum of emotions, there's another thread: intentional disorientation. Through this key metaphorical tool, Twain is utilizing not just a conjoined body to illustrate the evils of slavery, but the suggestion of a conjoined body that, in real life, was itself a slaveholding body (Wu 35). In addition, that body was also possessed of an intersectional identity that exceeds the bounds of metaphor. That Chang and Eng Bunker were real people with a complicated and multiply-burdened identity and that they are being used consistently as a metaphor for national fracture, functions as both a highly effective metaphor and a highly problematic representation of disability, no matter how effective it may appear to function as a vehicle of meaning, .

Twain further complicates this tension between craft and ethics in the paragraph following the "literary Caesarean section" metaphor, when he states that the impetus for the story he excised - which was, of course, called *Those Extraordinary Twins* - was not Chang and Eng at all, but a picture that Twain had seen of a "youthful Italian 'freak' - or 'freaks'[xxv] - which was - or which were - on exhibition in our cities - a combination consisting of two heads and four arms joined to a single body and a single pair of legs - and I thought I would write an extravagantly fantastic little story with this freak of nature as the hero - or heroes…" (230). This section of Twain's essay is notable for several reasons. First of all, it's the only place in a handful of pages where so many dashes are used in such a short textual space. Dashes do appear in other places in the text, but they are used sparingly; here, there are eight in the space of a single sentence. The text reads as if Twain, who depicts himself as bumbling through the construction of this entire novel, is fumbling for words when it comes to describing the conjoined twins.

But what Twain is actually achieves in this passage, particularly within the gaps in the text itself, is a more meaningful function for textual fragmentation. First, the dashes and gaps mimic the constant fracture and rebuilding of narrative modeled by the freak show ballyhoo model. But they are also simultaneously a visual representation of national fracture and the rhetorical disruption caused by freakish bodies. In both cases, the dashes here signify both textual fragmentation and an attempt to suture those fragments together. But dashes often function as stand-ins for textual hesitation, a visual marker of too little discursive material that must somehow be blocked and filled because of the notable absence of text. In Twain's case, however, instead of there being too little discursive material, there is too much: the text here is overburdened with description. As a result, the use of dashes here becomes particularly pronounced, which suggests the dashes themselves have one additional function. That function is that the fragments that Twain is attempting to suture together are not just his words, but also the union itself. Twain's work is like the freak show barker's encouragement to "step right up": we are prompted to consider his usage of dashes a signal to read the gaps and flaws in his text more carefully.

What's also significant in this section is that the conjoined twins are represented multiple times with two different verb tenses, suggesting Twain's seeming inability to determine whether or not the conjoined twins represent a single person or two. This suggestion is of course disingenuous. We know from Twain's satirical yet nuanced articulation of the tensions between Chang and Eng that he is well aware that conjoined people are still two distinct people. Familiarity with Twain's work and particularly with *Pudd'nhead Wilson* indicates that even this use of punctuation—although undoubtedly

ableist—is intended to function as both a mode of fracture and a mode of doubling in Twain's allegory. One of the most prominent themes in Twain's work is his utilization of doubling or twinning, commonly discussed through the lens of Freud's theory of the uncanny double. Like the use of dashes in this section, Twain's dual use of verb tense is not evidence of his bumbling construction but instead of his precision and a sign to read with care: it is a visual representation of his theme of doubling, which pervades both *Puddn'head Wilson* and *Those Extraordinary Twins*. It is also another visual reminder that nearly 30 years after the end of the Civil War, the United States was still struggling with its identity and still unsure how or even whether it could function as a unified nation.

Although I'd like to dwell longer on Twain's various representations and deployments of conjoinment, it's also important to look at what comes next in his essay, because it further contextualizes his use of conjoinment as metaphor. In the sentences immediately following his description of the conjoined twins, Twain describes how he "lavishly elaborated" the story and added to the conjoined twins "a silly young miss for a heroine, and two old ladies and two boys for the minor parts." The story, he said, "kept spreading along, and spreading along, and other people got to intruding themselves and taking up more and more room with their talk and their affairs." After adding Wilson, Roxana, and Tom Driscoll, states Twain, he notices that they had taken over the book and the original cast of characters "were nowhere to be seen; they had disappeared from the story sometime or other. I hunted about and found them - found them stranded, idle, forgotten, and permanently useless" (230).

If you do not read the gaps of this text and merely its surface coherence, Twain charts what appears to be a narrative hijacking: a series of three characters who drift in and wrest control of the narrative from their creator. If we dissect this narrative and read its gaps the way we do the freak show ballyhoo, we can find a more in-depth narrative than the one Twain performs for us: it's no accident that all three characters that Twain describes as being interlopers are by their very nature outsiders: Roxy, a recently-freed slave; Tom, the Driscoll heir who is in actuality Roxy's son; and Puddn'head Wilson, the titular character and stranger who comes to town and lives on its outskirts until his role becomes pivotal during the novel's courtroom conclusion. It's no accident that the former central characters in the book are white Dawson's Landing residents who have been displaced. Here, Twain is enacting the ballyhoo model of narrative rupture within the narrative frame, a textual shuffle and restructuring that archives marginal stories at its center rather than strictly the white ones that used to be the focus. In addition, by moving outsiders and racially hybrid characters to the novel's center and pushing the white population to the fringe, Twain is simultaneously allegorizing continued racial tensions in the South following the conclusion of the Civil War and rising white panic during Reconstruction at the thought of freed slaves hijacking Southern politics and culture.

But Twain does not just stop there. In order to entrench marginal stories at the center of his text and at the same time make his allegory patently clear to his readers, he not only pushes his white characters to the edges of the story; he first threatens murder, then rewrites their characters completely, and finally, excises them wholly from the original text. The first plane of meaning here is explicit: Twain is hyperbolizing the fears that white Southerners felt after Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation and freed

the slaves, and these Southerners subsequently watched free blacks begin to integrate into Southern white society during Reconstruction. But the second is also interesting: it ties the white characters, especially Rowena, directly to the conjoined twins. In fact, Twain links Rowena to one of the twins romantically and describes her as "an ass," as someone who said "stupid, irritating things and was…nauseatingly sentimental." Rowena, and by default the other white characters, is linked directly to the narrative's most obvious freaks, and her behavioral characteristics take on the cast of a performance. When, in the next sentence, Twain states that "Rowena went out in the backyard after supper and to see the fireworks and fell down the well and got drowned" (232), in addition to suggesting the realization of white fears of extinction by free blacks, it models the freak show by making a dramatic performance of her death and figures as yet another corporeal enactment of narrative rupture.

Twain notes that Rowena's death is really not that big of a deal because it served a particular function: "it loosened up Rowena from where she was stuck and got her out of the way, and that was the main thing. It seemed a prompt good way of weeding out the people that had got stalled." It is, in fact, such a good way of "loosening up" those characters that Twain then proposes using it against the remainder of the characters in Rowena's troupe: he proceeds to round up Aunt Patsy Cooper and Aunt Betsy Hale, the two older women, and "drowns" them in the well. He would, in fact, have used it on all of the members of the story, he notes, but "I gave up the idea, partly because I believed that if I kept that up it would arouse attention, and perhaps sympathy with those people, and partly because it was not a large well and would not hold anymore anyway" (232).

In part, this is Twain poking fun at himself and complicating his allegory. But it also presents him with a conundrum: the story, he notes, was still "unsatisfactory." He then goes to great lengths to point out the division that already exists in the story: one set of characters, he notes, "were becoming so inordinately prominent and who persisted in remaining so to the end"; the others "made a large noise and a great to-do for a little while and then suddenly played out utterly and fell down a well." There is, he states, "a radical defect somewhere, and I must search it out and cure it" (232-233).

There is a lot to unpack in Twain's classification of the competing storylines as "a radical defect" and considerable hubris in his belief that he can "cure" it. This of course, is predicated on the idea that there is a "cured" or "normal" status to which the story can return. If we are to believe that the story is a body, then, in order to be understood under the modern conception of "normal," then the body must be in good working order—it must be healthy. In his introduction to *The Disability Studies Reader*, Lennard J. Davis notes that the concept of normalcy only entered the English lexicon around 1840—around the same time that the American freak show began its rise to prominence. This of course is mere correlation; the root of our modern understanding of normalcy, notes Davis, comes from French statistician Adolphe Quetelet, who "contributed the most to a generalized notion of the normal as an imperative" (2). In his "A Treatise on Man and the Development of His Faculties," Quetelet posits the statistical existence of the "average" man as a unifying and grounding force: "the average man, indeed, is in a nation what the centre of gravity is in a body" (96) he notes. But even Quetelet observes that the average man is a fiction: he calls us to consider the idea in "abstraction" and "if," he notes, "the average man were completely determined…we would consider him as the type of

perfection; and everything differing from his proportions or conditions, would constitute deformity or disease." Quetelet also cautions readers not to use his abstract theory as a measure for real people: "we must observe that general laws referring to masses are essentially imperfect when applied to individuals" (98).

The argument being made by many disability studies scholars about the nature of Quetelet's work is accurate: he does indeed make reductive claims about the determinate value of the "imperfect" human body, and his work was indeed used by eugenicists like Sir Frances Galton to further marginalize people with disabilities. But what is sometimes missed is that Quetelet makes it very clear that he intended his statistical observations to live in the realm of theory, not to be applied to individuals as a means of determining societal value or worth. While this might be a particularly compelling idea in an era like the late nineteenth century which was increasingly influenced by eugenics and calls for unity, what's particularly interesting about Twain's nod to Quetelet's work is how it illuminates not just the fiction of national coherence, but also the inherent fiction of the concept of the average citizen.

In great part, this focus on "defect" and "cure" functions as a distraction from what is particularly stark in Twain's depiction of the two sets of characters. Aside from his clearly inflammatory statement, the two sets—one new, prominent and on the rise, the other older and "played out"—certainly reflect fears of rising black autonomy and power during Reconstruction that results in the institution of the first Jim Crow laws in 1877. But these two words also have additional resonance when considered through the lens of Twain's commentary in the next paragraph: the defect Twain identifies is of course the conjoined twin stories—the two stories in one, one a farce, the other a tragedy. The

solution, states Twain, is simple: “I pulled out the farce and left the tragedy.” The original team are left in as names, not as characters: “their prominence was wholly gone; they were not even worth drowning; so I removed that detail” (233).

The classification of the outsiders’ story as a tragedy and the story of the peripheral white characters and the conjoined twins’ story as a farce is interesting in part because so much of Twain’s work intermingles these two genric forms. But what’s also interesting is that the outsiders’ story, which Twain suggests is the tragedy, is rooted in the antebellum South and reinforces the dangers of the rise of black prominence and its ultimate result: being “sold down the river”—all concerns which other scholars have taken up ably. The story of the conjoined twins and the extracted white characters, however, becomes something more: not just a work to be considered in conjunction with its originary novel, but something that deserves attention on its own, a story that is far more than just a fictional representation of the excising of disability or the preservation of white culture. This story, as Twain notes, is the “farce,” and I would argue that by tying Rowena romantically to one twin and cutting out her story wholesale, combined with Twain's description of her histrionics, *Those Extraordinary Twins* in essence becomes the freak show to *Pudd'nhead Wilson*’s big top. By rupturing his narrative within the frame in the manner of the freak show ballyhoo, Twain makes the marginal central in *Pudd’nhead Wilson* and aligns whiteness with the performative, dynamic strangeness that is characteristic of the freak in *Those Extraordinary Twins*.

The conclusion of Twain’s essay intimates that the ways in which disability is represented in *Those Extraordinary Twins* is both enriching and problematic. But I’ll also illustrate how by enfreaking whiteness, the text simultaneously makes freakishness more

disturbing because it aligns it with the race fears pervasive among white communities in the Reconstruction South. At the same time, I'll show how the text democratizes freakishness because it casts not just the conjoined twins but a whole host of characters into the category of freak. While that does not negate the disturbing nature of the conclusion of Twain's essay, which speaks calmly of separating the twins into two men—a move that speaks overwhelmingly to ableist and normative behavior that attempts to rectify the perceived "errors" of nature—it forces readers to recognize that Twain has been cavalier and brutal with virtually all of his characters. In that sense, the conjoined twins are treated not much differently than anyone else. Although they may have undergone a surgical separation, to be sure, at least they weren't killed off. Close reading this model of narrative rupture allows us to see how these very different stories from the margins are archived alongside the legacy of slavery in both texts.

Whiteness as Freak and Disability as Autonomy in Those Extraordinary Twins

While the bulk of my discussion thus far has focused on the essay that introduces *Those Extraordinary Twins*, it's equally important to discuss the short story itself in order to understand the full scope and structure of Twain's larger project of modeling the rupture of the freak show ballyhoo on the page and using that rupture as a mechanism to archive and reveal marginalized stories. As I mentioned briefly in the last section of this chapter, part of the reason to spend more time with this text is because the majority of the scholarship about this text treats *Pudd'nhead Wilson* as its primary focus. The story, however, is often glossed along with the novel or cast to the side; scholars such as Catherine O'Connell note that the short story is "incomprehensible" (101) without

Pudd'nhead Wilson. I argue, however, that the short story functions quite adeptly as a series of loosely linked stories designed to mirror the narrative rupture in Twain's essay. In other words, it too follows the model of the freak show ballyhoo and it illustrates the narrative potential of that disruption by serving as an archival space that both highlights the freakishness of whiteness and illustrates the autonomy of the conjoined twins.

The story begins with rupture: "The conglomerate twins were brought on the stage in Chapter I of the original extravaganza" (234), writes Twain. This first sentence refers to the twins as a "conglomerate" and also references their appearance in the first section of *Pudd'nhead Wilson*, which makes the story feel as if it begins *in medias res* and also emphasizes both its inherent link to the novel and its separation from it. It also makes no small nod to the performative nature of both texts, which emphasizes the interpretation that the originary novel is the Big Top and this excised story the freak show; at this point, the twins have made a main stage appearance and are now relegated to a sideshow marvel.

In the next scene, however, the twins become more central, even before their appearance in the story. Aunt Patsy Cooper receives a letter from the twins requesting to board with her and Rowena begs to hear it. The letter, notes Aunt Patsy, begins with a formal address: *Honored Madam*. The address, notes Rowena, "shows they're high-bred." Patsy then reads: "My brother and I have seen your advertisement, by chance, in a copy of your local journal" - and Rowena interrupts again to note that the quality of the twins' writing is "so beautiful and smooth" (234). The conversation here quickly impresses on the reader how important conventions are to these two women and how the use of them immediately garners their support. Second, the back and forth between Patsy

and her daughter rhetorically mimics the twins themselves: the dashes function to break up their sentences, which are rarely stated in full as they discuss the twins, and act as a rhetorical representation of how conjoined twins disrupt even the language used to discuss them. This is also another instance of Twain's effective but problematic usage of conjoined twins as metaphor.

But this section also operates in a fashion that is rarely allowed for characters classified as freaks: it allows the freaks to speak for themselves even before we see them described in the text. Although we have seen the twins described as conglomerate, we hear them speak eloquently and formally using elite discourse to entice their hosts without the intermediary of a freak show barker. This is also further evidence of the critical interpretation that the freak, despite its performative assignation, maintains a particular kind of agency and ability to influence the development of the public more than the public influences the development of the freak because, as Rachel Adams notes, "the freak's response is cultivated, the public's genuine" (31).

When the twins do finally appear in the text, however, evidence of narrative rupture emerges. The twins' arrival is preceded by "two negro men" who enter "each carrying a trunk"; this double appearance of black men carrying the goods of the twins immediately ties their arrival to difference and to the legacy of slavery rather than to the elite white space that they're entering. Soon after, however, the twins appear, which has a profound impact on the Coopers: "Then followed a stupefying apparition - a double-headed human creature with four arms, one body, and a single pair of legs! It - or they, as you please - bowed with elaborate foreign formality, but the Coopers could not respond immediately; they were paralyzed" (236). It is here, as usual, that Twain's descriptive

powers begin to overload the narrative. The twins are depicted using similar descriptions and punctuation as Twain used in his introductory essay and just as he described Chang and Eng and the Tocci brothers when he saw a photograph of them. But his added descriptors—words such as "stupefying" and "double-headed human creature"—although reductive, are also models of the ballyhoo's rupture and restructuring. In this scene, however, Twain has flipped the barker's script: instead of enticing the audience with hyperbolic descriptions alone, instead he showcases their humanity and then their marvelous oddity simultaneously.

The arrival of the twins is even more spectacular when we consider how quickly they disappear from the scene. Despite the chaos they create among the Coopers and the slave Nancy, who "stood petrified and staring, with a tray of wrecked tea-things at her feet" (236), they are gone by the end of the page, off to their rooms for the night. The effect is that of the freak show's particular brand of titillation: Twain gives his readers a brief glimpse of an oddity and then promptly closes the curtain again. This feeds the perception of exploitation that always accompanies the freak show and its performers and exhibitions. Indeed, this is magnified by Twain's description on the next page, which points out that even the terrors of a storm pale in comparison to the twins' arrival.

The conversation that follows between Aunt Patsy and Rowena also suggests that they are struggling to understand the twins' corporeality: Aunt Patsy calls them "awful," and although Rowena defends the brothers, she refers to them singularly: "Ma, you oughtn't to begin by getting up a prejudice against him. I'm sure he is good-hearted and means well. Both of his faces show it" (237). While Aunt Patsy's insult is clearly cruel, Rowena's is more subtly so: by referring to the twins as "he," she shows she is unable to

acknowledge that, despite the construction of their body, the twins have two heads and thus two brains, capable of independent thought and action, and thus should be treated as two distinct individuals. In essence, Rowena's speech is the end result of Twain's attempt to stitch together the twins in his introductory essay: by describing the twins as a singular person, she is attempting not just to join them together, but to force their brains to occupy the same space and to completely erase their conjoined bodies and thus the rupture of national coherence. Rowena does not consider Dawson's Landing to be fractured at this point in the narrative; she does not see that it is framed by a tradition of national rupture fed in large part by the persistent specter of slavery. Rather than a damaging force, slavery to her is commonplace and acceptable, as we can see in the casual mention of the slave Nancy's horror alongside the white Cooper family's. The horror here in this moment becomes the conjoined twins, not the enslaved woman in their midst. In fact, the slave and the white owner are aligned with one another in their horror of the bodily Other.

But the twins do not serve as a distraction from the narrative's focus for long, and both the frame and the narrative rupture within it soon reassert themselves. In the following sentence, Aunt Patsy notes differences between the twins that make her uncomfortable: "The one on the left - I mean the one on its left – hasn't near as good a face, in my opinion, as its brother." This casual statement, which furthers Twain's use of the dash to indicate both narrative suture and casual dismemberment, is also dehumanizing: it reduces the twins to a single entity that she strips of gender without their consent. In addition, Patsy points out the striking physical difference between the brothers: Luigi, she notes, is the "dark-skinned one" and Angelo, who "is as good as

gold," has "kind blue eyes, and curly copper hair and fresh complexion." Rowena attempts to bestow some humanity on the twins when she notes that Angelo has a "noble face…just royal" and beautiful and notes that Luigi's face is equally beautiful. In fact, she states, "there's no such wonderful faces and handsome heads in this town" (237). Because it is difficult to read *Those Extraordinary Twins* in isolation without reading it against Twain's essay and *Pudd'nhead Wilson*, it is inevitable that we will read the difference in complexion both as an echo of Tom and Chambers and metaphorically as representative of whites and blacks inhabiting the same national corpus, as well as a reminder of slavery and the resulting national rupture.

But Aunt Patsy is dismissive of Rowena's statement and becomes more caught up in how the twins work their appendages than in the fact that they are marvels and could be considered not just equals to townspeople, but finer specimens: "There was just a wormy quirming of arms in the air - seeemd to be a couple of dozen of them, all writhing at once, and it just made me dizzy to see them go…Each has an arm on each shoulder. Now then, you tell me which of them belongs to which, if you can. They don't know, themselves - they just work whichever arm comes in handy" (238). Pasty's focus on the mechanical nuances of how the twins operate their limbs is a common expression of fascination with disability, but it is also the same kind of fascination about its collection that pervades the materials produced by the freak show about its collection. In a publication called "History of Animals and Leading Curiosities" produced by Barnum in 1873, for example, the description of "The Man Without Arms" focuses far more on the physical mechanics of his body than on any element of his character;[xxvi] indeed, he is not even given a name. Throughout the remainder of their conversation in this section, Patsy,

Rowena, and the children express both fascination and empathy for the twins, which merely reinforces the white abled gaze and casts the twins as objects of pity.

The next scene, however, reveals more clearly Twain's larger purposes. He removes the reader from the scene of traditional white hospitality and to a far more intimate locale: the bedroom where the twins are getting undressed and ready for bed: "The abundance of sleeve made the partnership-coat hard to get off, for it was like skinning a tarantula; but it came at last, after much tugging and perspiring" (239). Twain's description paralleling the twin's unclothing to the skinning of a spider delivers much of the same fascinated revulsion that pervades much of Patsy and Rowena's discussion. But Twain also uses the next description to elaborate on the twins' grotesquerie: "Each cravat, as to color, was in perfect taste, so far as its owner's complexion was concerned - a delicate pink, in the case of the blonde brother, a violent scarlet in the case of the brunette - but as a combination they broke all the laws of taste known to civilization. Nothing more fiendish and irreconcilable than those shrieking and blaspheming colors could have been contrived" (240). What's notable here again is Twain's usage of the dash, a signal to read carefully, which draws our attention to the heinous nature not of the twins themselves, but of their color pairing. The horror in this scene masquerades as a horror of cravat color, but it is a reflection of the tensions and fears of Reconstruction: that despite emancipation, whites and blacks could not inhabit the same national corpus on equal footing.

Another significant moment of narrative rupture occurs when the twins first speak. Unlike the opening scene, there is no other person present in this scene. Angelo and Luigi volley back and forth between complaining about the tightness of boots to what

happens when one person is in command of the body and the other is not: “Luigi, I often consult your wishes, but you never consult mine. When I am in command I treat you as a guest; I try to make you feel at home; when you are in command you treat me as an intruder, you make me feel unwelcome” (240). It is this discussion between two minds sharing the same body that encourages us to read the narrative gap and offers insight into how the twins manage their shared space. Although we cannot know exactly what this experience is like, Twain’s attempt to inhabit the character of the twins and to imagine how that distribution of power and control might manifest is both fascinating, deeply empathetic, and a genuine excavation of a hidden story of marginal experience. But even when Twain veers away from explicit metaphor, the implicit metaphor is still there, the truth beneath the ballyhoo: this commentary on power and control of space, given the introductory essay that he uses to frame this text against *Pudd’nhead Wilson*, is also, still a commentary on how the United States navigates its continuing national rupture, and particularly how the North and South and whites and blacks navigate shared space in the both the antebellum and postbellum United States.

Also particularly significant to understanding narrative rupture as an analytical tool for excavating marginalized stories comes in an examination of the books that Angelo and Luigi each chooses to read when they go to bed. Luigi chooses Paine’s *The Age of Reason*, a text printed in three parts in 1794, 1795, and 1807. What is interesting about Twain’s usage of this text is first his dropping of the article “the,” suggesting a continuation of the age rather than its singularity, effectively pairing it with the more modern period in which Twain is writing. But also significant is the book’s content. Paine, as Jay E. Smith notes, was arguing in this text for a deistic religion rooted in

reason and scientific inquiry and "warned against the three modes of superstition in Christianity: mystery, miracle, and prophecy" (749). What is particularly interesting about this choice is that this appeal to mystery, miracle and prophecy was a staple both in the discourse of the freak show advertisements and in the ballyhoo. Twain's message here is particularly pointed: he is having a potential beneficiary of freak show technique directly refute that material and its emotional appeal. It is also an implicit refutation of the treatment Luigi is receiving at the hands of the Coopers, who find his manifestation of difference appealing.

On the other hand, Angelo is reading *The Whole Duty of Man*, a text first published anonymously in 1658. In part, this profound hearkening back could be seen as a return to the very kind of myth and mysticism that Luigi eschews. But more importantly, it speaks directly to Christian biblical source material: Ecclesiastes 12:13, which, in the King James version, reads "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man." Angelo, then, is the strict Christian adherent, and Luigi is the one who considers himself bound to reason and inquiry.

The combined effect here of these various manifestations of the ballyhoo's model of narrative rupture—between the clashing colors of skin and cravat, the struggle for power between the twins, and the warring philosophies of the texts they read—makes Twain's message quite clear: the twins are two warring brothers inhabiting the same body. By offering competing and contradictory messages alongside one another, as with his use of dashes and verb tense, Twain is yet again encouraging us to read the gaps and flaws in his text carefully and to question those conclusions. Not only do we see the

twins' body as a metaphor for the persistent pattern of national rupture rooted in the legacy of slavery, but we also simultaneously see the twins as real people who have desires and fears when centered in the text.

Just as the queer intimacy of Ishmael and Queequeg dispersed among the crew of the Pequod in Chapter 2, so too does this deployment of a warring body as a narrative device also clearly has an impact on the other characters in Twain's text, and so too do the tensions between the two factions begins to replicate among them. In the next chapter, Patsy and Rowena speak of the twins before the enter the room for the morning. Patsy complains about their singing, which she finds discordant, but Rowena deems it lovely. When they hear the sound of footsteps on the stairs, Rowena illustrates that even in this short time in the twins' presence, her view of them has already begun to evolve: she strongly encourages her mother to consider the twins two people rather than as a singular: "*They*, ma - you ought to say *they* – it's nearer right" (243).

The scene that unfolds next while the twins join Patsy and Rowena for breakfast is quite remarkable; everyone at breakfast is fascinated by "the spectacle of one body feeding two heads," which they consider both "bizarre" and a "miracle." But there was, notes Twain, one distraction: "the hand that picked up a biscuit carried it to the wrong head, as often as any other way, and the wrong mouth devoured it. This was a puzzling thing, and marred the talk a little. It bothered the widow to such a degree that she presently dropped out of the conversation without knowing it, and fell to watching and guessing and talking to herself" (245). The discussion of the twins' eating habits, if left here, could easily be Twain's version of a freak show exploitation, a group of Dawson's Landing residents, watching the "spectacle" of the twins and marveling at the mechanics

of how they feed themselves. Twain's word choice here is particularly suggestive of this read: the body is a "spectacle" and puzzles Pasty, and Patsy is only able to see the twins as a series of odd assembled parts as opposed to a person.

But then scene shifts dramatically: instead of keeping her thoughts to herself, Patsy is pushed by Rowena to share them aloud: "I saw Mr. Angelo take up Mr. Luigi's coffee, and I thought maybe he – sha'n't I give you a cup, Mr. Angelo?" (245) Instead of continuing to watch the twins and attempt to interpret their actions to ourselves—which is how many have historically interpreted the freak show performance—Patsy breaks the fourth wall: she talks directly to the performer, and in doing so, transforms the show from an exploitative performance into an engaging interaction between two equals. This switch from passive observer to engaged interaction is, in fact, consistent with what scholars note are profound misconceptions about the nature of the freak show. Robert Bogdan points out that in the mid-nineteenth century, freaks played their personas "straight" so that people would believe the facade, but by the end of the nineteenth century and into the twentieth century, the personas were played in a more farcical manner that invited skepticism and interaction (114). Rachel Adams points out too that "freak shows promised to shock and amaze, but also encouraged their audiences to question what they saw, to remain vigilant about the possibility of deception." As a result, she notes, the sight of a freak's body didn't produce silence; instead, it often resulted in "shouts of laughter or outrage, knowingly incredulous comments, or rude prodding intended to prove its unreality" (13). While Patsy's question doesn't veer fully into a freak show exchange, it certainly echoes of it.

The scene then vacillates from spectacle to incisive commentary on how we view and treat difference: when asked, the twins respond that they occasionally feed one another because it is the sensible thing to do: "we are always helping each other that way. It is a great economy for us both; it saves time and labor. We have a system of signs which nobody can notice or understand but ourselves" (246). As a result, the conversation serves two purposes: it gives the twins the opportunity to discuss their habits and educates the others on the behaviors of conjoined twins, reframing them from strange or odd behaviors to behaviors that are typical of people who are conjoined. Once the twins explain their reasoning, the demeanor of all at the breakfast changes. Pasty becomes "dazed with admiration," declaring how wonderful their method of eating is. This dramatic shift in tone also illustrates that it is not the twins themselves who are freakish. Instead, it is the societal expectations for behavior that have been placed upon them by Dawson's Landing. In this parlor in Dawson's Landing, the freak show becomes not exploitative enterprise, but educational space.

Twain, however, is not content to allow the twins merely to justify their behavior; instead, he is intent upon illustrating that their bodily construction is not just a curiosity, but a way of life that the twins find highly desirable. He begins this deconstruction of ableism in the breakfast scene, when Luigi points out that while their construction has "disadvantages," it also has distinct advantages, such as allowing them to exploit their travel classification as a singular person and to save the price of a seat. But this incident is just a prelude. After Judge Driscoll gives the twins a tour of the village, which briefly puts the twins in the position of functioning as a traveling freak show for the village's population, the Judge indicates that he'll call on Luigi later to attend the Freethinkers

Society. Quickly, however, he apologizes to Angelo, and says that it wasn't his intention to leave him out. The text notes Angelo's hurt over the Judge's exclusion, but what is remarkable is that it spends the next two pages capitalizing on Judge Driscoll's rhetorical separation of the twins. The two pages that follow are solely Angelo's perspective, an interior monologue that delves into his deepest fears and forces him to confront his hidden desires:

> At times, in his seasons of deepest depressions, Angelo almost wished that he and his brother might become segregated from each other and be separate individuals, like other men. But of course as soon as his mind cleared and these diseased imaginings passed away, he shuddered at the repulsive thought…To be separate, as other men are! How awkward it would seem; how unendurable. What would he do with his hands, his arms? How would his legs feel? How odd, and strange, and grotesque every action, attitude, movement, gesture would be. To sleep by himself, eat by himself, walk by himself – how lonely, how unspeakably lonely! (253)

Eric Sundquist reads this scene as Angelo's endorsement of the separation of the twins; he notes that, in *Pudd'nhead Wilson*, the remaining "shreds" of the twins "yokes antebellum chattel slavery to post-Reconstruction neo-slavery in particularly compelling ways" and "in the twins' story itself Angelo finds normal men to be 'monstrosities' and 'deformities,' and their separateness an 'unsocial and uncanny construction,' but he still desires 'that he and his brother might become segregated from each other'" (259). While Sundquist chooses to interpret the parallels between antebellum slavery and Jim Crow as events that need linkage, I interpret them as evidence of the same pattern of national

rupture that persists throughout U.S. history. Still, that interpretive discrepancy is minor; what is far more significant is the very different ways in which Sundquist and I read Angelo's monologue. Just like Twain's narrative flourish of the "literary Caesarean metaphor," Sundquist's quote disarticulates Angelo's monologue, breaking it apart into pieces and moving them around to meet his meaning. The problem here is that by reversing the order of some of Angelo's statements, he makes it appear that Angelo desires segregation from his brother when the original quote indicates the exact opposite.

The model of the ballyhoo and its characteristic narrative rupture in this case also spreads its influence to Sundquist's critique. But if we read the gaps there alongside the gaps in Twain's text, Angelo's story becomes clearer. In fact, this section of Angelo's monologue is fascinating because it provides a particularly nuanced and surprising commentary on conjoined embodiment. Angelo articulates conjoinment not as the profound desire for the separation and autonomy supposedly reflected in typical embodiment, but instead as a celebration of intimacy; to Angelo, singular embodiment is the true state of grotesequerie and profound loneliness. When Angelo looks at bodies with one head and two arms and two legs, he sees not a whole body, but a body that is missing something. But the monologue is also fascinating because, despite Angelo's desire to stay joined to his brother, the scene carries not a word or a thought from Luigi, giving Angelo complete intellectual autonomy. It reminds us that he is fully human and fully capable of making his own decisions separate from his brother.

Yet like the rest of Twain's text, this monologue also continues to adapt the ballyhoo's model of narrative rupture and persistent archive of slavery's legacy. When read through this lens, the remainder of Angelo's monologue takes on new meaning: the

inability to understand the usage of his limbs, the grotesquerie of his singular actions, and the unbearable loneliness become a commentary in particular about how America would fare if the Union had permanently failed as a result of the Civil War. The idea that the North and South could separate and somehow survive as countries and governments independent of one another is unthinkable to Twain; thus, despite the legacy of slavery and its implications for both the North and the South - and Twain suggests, much like conjoined twins such as Angelo and Luigi - the two regions are permanently bound.

In addition, while "segregate" certainly means to separate or isolate, it's no coincidence that Twain is using a term that also is the marker of the enforcement of racial segregation; indeed, his language seems like a heralding of where the country was headed in the mid-1890s. Just one year after his book was published, what Sundquist notes as "the spread of the segregationist thesis" was occurring (251): first, Booker T. Washington's famous address to the Atlanta Cotton States and International Exposition in 1895, where he noted "In all things that are purely social we can be as separate as the fingers, yet one as the hand in all things essential to mutual progress." This, also notes Sundquist, reinforced the "separate but equal" conclusions of *Plessy v. Ferguson*, which was decided in 1896. Angelo's speech, however, completely refutes this conclusion. While Twain doesn't state outright the fundamental unfairness of the "separate but equal" doctrine, he instead appeals to his readers' collectivity: he notes that separation and segregation equal profound loneliness.

At the end of the monologue, Angelo concludes by noting that his reaction is perfectly "natural" and that "to have felt otherwise would have been unnatural" (253). This, too, is a purposeful word choice on the part of Twain; he is aligning the twins'

instincts and desires with the desires of all other typical people rather than flagging them as somehow aberrant. But it also serves as a preface for Angelo's next point, which speaks both to the experience of embodied difference and again directly to a nation attempting (and often failing) to heal from the latest rupture of the Civil War: "He had known no life but a combined one; he had been familiar with it from his birth; he was not able to conceive of any other as being agreeable, or even bearable. To him, in the privacy of his secret thoughts, all other men were monsters, deformities: and during three-fourths of his life their aspect had filled him with what promised to be an unconquerable aversion" (253). At the beginning of this excerpt, Twain is again impressing the body of conjoined twins upon a persistently fractured nation; he is equating the fact that Angelo has never known a life without being conjoined with Luigi to a nation that was founded on the framework of an institution that ripped black bodies from Africa and transplanted them as chattel to America and on the untenable principles of two different regions conjoined together that would grow even more economically disparate as time passed. In addition, Angelo's private thoughts that "other men were monsters, deformities" is also revealing. Given the growing ableist inclinations of late nineteenth-century society,[xxvii] one might expect Twain to peer out from the eyes of Angelo and see typical people as enviable. But this is not at all the case. In fact, Angelo finds them grotesque, again the freaks. In light of the twins' later demise, this commentary also becomes a prescient reminder of just how grotesque societal rules were in the nineteenth century, particularly for anyone manifesting any form of difference.

The further we progress into the text of *Those Extraordinary Twins*, the more clearly the text serves as a model of the ballyhoo's rupture, archiving slavery's legacy

alongside societal constraints on conjoined embodiment and the simultaneous attempts of Angelo and Luigi to assert their autonomy. In a somewhat lighthearted scene, for example, Angelo and Luigi discuss how they negotiate control of their body and how it shifts each week on Saturday at midnight from one twin to another. It's so reliable, in fact, notes Luigi, "that during our stay in many of the great cities of the world, the public clocks were regulated by it; and as hundreds of thousands of private clocks and watches were set and corrected in accordance with the public clocks, we really furnished the standard of time for the entire city" (257). In some ways, this scene reads as a validation of the normalcy and reliability of the twins; if they are capable of setting the time for entire cities, that gives them some measure of control. But viewing the body of the twins as functional only because it is a timekeeping device also saps them of some of their humanity. In addition, this image of the twins, one dark, one light, shifting control week to week is a profound reminder of the nation's perpetual volley between some measure of stability and some form of crisis, in particular the late nineteenth century shift from slavery to black freedom and then back to slavery again under the guise of rule of law during Jim Crow. The constant enslavement of one twin to the other suggests a postbellum racial atmosphere in which whites and blacks were unable to imagine a life apart from one another and unable to inhabit a space where they both felt simultaneously free.

Another example of the story's archiving of racial tension is in the scene where the twins have been engaged to duel Tom Driscoll. This incident occurs after Luigi kicks Tom at an anti-temperance meeting and Tom subsequently brings suit against the two, then loses at trial because the court is unable to determine which of the twins did the

kicking and so releases them. The duel is the result. The difficulty of the situation, however, is that the duel is slated to take place on the cusp of the twins' bodily change: Angelo is slated to take over shortly, and he doesn't want to duel, but Luigi does. They hurry along the duel so that it can take place before the shift. Angelo protests, and Luigi proceeds to put him in his place:

> You take a great deal too prominent a part in this thing for a person who has got nothing to do with it. You should remember that you are here only by courtesy, and are without official recognition; officially you are not here at all; officially you do not even exist. To all intents and purposes you are absent from this place, and you ought for your own modesty's sake to reflect that it cannot become a person who is not present here to be taking this sort of public and indecent prominence in a matter in which he is not in the slightest degree concerned. (283)

Although Angelo comments on Luigi's "reasonableness," if we read the gaps of Luigi's demands of his brother, the reasonableness disappears. While Luigi's commentary functions in part to highlight the absurdity of the ableist cultural constructs and how bodies of difference find them nearly impossible to navigate, it is also a discomfiting reminder of the state of race relations in late nineteenth-century America. Luigi's monologue is both a narrative manifestation of the Three-Fifths Compromise of 1787, where slaves were effectively counted as only three-fifths of a person as part of a state's population, and its legislative echo, the widespread disenfranchisement of blacks after Reconstruction. As a result, this scene carries not only Twain's trademark absurdity but also the profound rage of an enslaved and disenfranchised people.

The conclusion of *Those Extraordinary Twins* offers one final, compelling example of how Twain utilized the narrative rupture of the ballyhoo model to archive the stories of marginalized lives. In a brief scene not long after the duel in which Angelo is attempting to recover from his injuries and Luigi is scoffing at his discomfort, Rowena, feeling sorry for Angelo, murmurs to herself "Oh, if I but had the dear privilege of protecting and defending him with my weak voice! - But alas! This sweet boon is denied me by the cruel conventions of social intercourse" (292). Rowena's use of her voice to discuss her inability to speak up in defense of another because of social constraints is Twainian farce at its best. It is also a pointed acknowledgement that part of the cruelty of the "conventions of social intercourse" are the ways in which they make those who follow them unable to understand either their own autonomy or the ramifications of their actions. It is, after all, clear by the conclusion of the story what ramifications there are for the twins. Just like the fractiousness between the twins and the deepening divisions of post-Reconstruction America, the town of Dawson's Landing becomes fractious as well; in fact, the quarrelsomeness grows into a full-blown rupture, which makes the story's very setting yet another alignment with the ballyhoo model. The town divides into a Luigi side and an Angelo side and stages an election: Angelo declares his allegiance to the Whigs, Reform, and Teetotalers, and Luigi pledges to the Democrats. Each time Luigi was in charge, "he carried Angelo to balls, rum shops, Son's of Liberty parades, horse races…everywhere else that could damage him with his party and the church." When it was Angelo's turn, he "carried Luigi diligently to all manner of moral and religious gatherings, doing his best to regain the ground he had lost before" (299). As a result, the twins are under constant criticism.

This criticism becomes insurmountable and unreconcilable, however, when, on the eve of the election, Luigi drinks a couple of glasses of whiskey that subsequently also makes Angelo drunk. Angelo tries to speak at the Teetotaler's Union, but he is so drunk that "persons in the audience began to howl and throw things at him, and then the meeting rose in wrath and chased him home." The most difficult part of this for Angelo, however, is Rowena's response. Despite her growing affection for Angelo and his clear moral focus, "she said she would never marry a man who drank. 'But I don't drink,' he pleaded. 'That is nothing to the point,' she said coldly, 'you get drunk, and that is worse'" (299-300). While this entire scene is heightened farce, it also illustrates that Rowena is more concerned about the perception of impropriety than she is about the oppression and abuse that Angelo is suffering at the hands of his brother. That abuse is compounded in the story's final moment, where Luigi is elected an alderman but cannot be seated because his brother was not elected, and they are connected. The end result is that the case scales up the ladder of the justice system with no resolution, bankrupting the town, and finally someone suggests putting an end to it by putting a noose around the twins. The objection is that Angelo did nothing, so the story concludes with Luigi's hanging alone.

This ending illustrates adherence to social rules and conventions at the expense of a body of difference. It is reminiscent both of the Judgement of Solomon in Kings, but taken to a clear extreme: instead of a mother giving her baby to the other to prevent its death, there is no wise force to intercede, and the twins are split in two. But it is also an echo of the lynchings that dominated the American landscape from the late 1880s through the 1960s, many of whose victims were innocent. The hanging is an

uncomfortable reminder of America's adherence to rigid social convention and how that adherence made it difficult for whites and blacks to coexist. And it is, of course, a final, definitive marker of the model of the ballyhoo and the persistent legacy of national rupture that Twain suggests is America's natural state.

It is this kind of expansive historical and cultural resonance that makes *Pudd'nhead Wilson* an ambitious and complex text, albeit a text that also exhibits a number of deeply problematic flaws, rather than a failure. This chapter's purpose, of course, was to illustrate how the ballyhoo serves as a model for reading frame narrative and narrative rupture in Twain's work. The result is that we as readers can also draw a clear parallel between the antebellum South of Dawson's Landing and Twain's Gilded Age, both of which featured a thin veneer of propriety and elegance over a seedy core. That seediness is rooted in America's legacy of rupture, which is exhibited in particularly stark relief in the institution of slavery as well as in Twain's fractured novel, essay, and story. While it is critical to study the narratives and works of marginalized people during this same period, it is also important to recognize how the legacy of rupture—particularly the unhealed wound of slavery—helps us ferret out the persistent presence of marginal stories in formerly all-white spaces. It also helps raise our awareness of the white writers who articulated—often very imperfectly—the impact of slavery's legacy and the hazards of the pathologization of difference.

[xiv] In his 1842 *A Treatise on Man And the Development of His Faculties*, French Belgian statistician M.A. (Adolphe) Quetelet established a working definition for an "average" man; he noted a range of characteristics fall within the range of a perceived "normal" and that "every quality within conceivable limits is good…it is only in its extreme deviations from the mean that it is bad" (18). While he is credited with establishing modern conceptions of normalcy and contributing to ableist constructs, he also acknowledges that the average man is a fiction (113). Please see page 96-97 for further discussion of the nineteenth-century implications of the term "average" and Quetelet's work.

[xv] Ethical concerns are, of course, a fundamental part of this discussion and my larger study as a whole, but I am also attempting here to acknowledge the mechanisms of the freak show and their material successes, ethically questionable though they may be.

[xvi] "I pulled one of the stories out by the roots, and left the other one—a kind of literary Caesarean operation" (208).

[xvii] See also "Notes on Narrative Embedding," Mieke Bal and Eve Favor, *Poetics Today*, vol. 2, no. 2, Winter 1981, pp. 41-59.

[xviii] See Fiedler's "As Free As Any Cretur" in the August 15, 1955 issue of the *New Republic* and Leavis's "Mark Twain's Neglected Classic" in the February 1956 *Commentary XXI*, p. 135.

[xix] Anne P. Wigger, "The Composition of Mark Twain's '*Pudd'nhead Wilson* and *Those Extraordinary Twins*': Chronology and Development," *Modern Philology*, Vol. 55, No. 2 (Nov. 1957), pg. 93.

[xx] See Wu's *Chang and Eng Reconnected: The Original Siamese Twins in American Culture*, Temple University Press, 2012; O'Connell's "Resecting Those Extraordinary Twins: Pudd'nhead Wilson and the Cost of Killing Half, *Nineteenth Century Literature*, vol. 57, no. 1, June 2002, pp. 100-124; and Gillman's *Dark Twins: Imposture and Identity in Mark Twain's America*, The University of Chicago Press, 1989.

[xxi] See "Anti-Religious Work by Twain, Long Withheld, to Be Published; Author's Daughter, Who Barred Release of Venomous 'Letters From the Earth' in Thirties, Now Agrees to Printing," *The New York Times*, August 24, 1962.

[xxii] There's some debate among historians about the exact date of the end of the Civil War. For a comprehensive list of argued dates and the reasonings behind them, please see Richard Gardner's "The Last Battlefield of the Civil War and its Preservation," *The Journal of America's Military Past*, Spring/Summer 2013, pp. 5-22.

[xxiii] *Carte de visite* were nineteenth-century albumen print photographs that became the rage in Europe and America after French photographer André Adolphe Eugène Disdéri popularized this medium in the 1850s and 1860s. See William Welling's *Photography in America: The Formative Years, 1839-1900*, University of New Mexico Press, 1987 and Rachel Adams's *Sideshow U.S.A.: Freaks and the American Cultural Imagination*, University of Chicago Press, 2001, pp. 33 for further discussion.

[xxiv] See Appendix B for a photo of the Tocci twins. See the Appendix C for comparison for an image included in the 1922 edition of Pudd'nhead Wilson; this image is an interesting one to compare to the Tocci twins because it's a clear depiction of freak show promotions, but instead of the Toccis or even Chang and Eng Bunker, it features female conjoined twins who resemble Daisy and Violet Hilton, the English performers who were popular in the early twentieth century.

[xxv] Again, see Appendix B.
[xxvi] See Appendix D1 and D2.
[xxvii] Robert Bogdan notes that the exhibition of freaks became less socially acceptable at the turn of the 20th century with the application of Mendel's laws of genetics to human traits (that certain traits were genetically transferrable) and in its application by eugenicists. I would also argue (as, in part, does Lennard J. Davis) that we root some of this change in the broader application of Quetelet's theory of the "average" man by eugenicists such as Sir Frances Galton, in Charles Darwin's On the Origin of Species (1859) and its theory of survival of the fittest, and in the organization of doctors by the American Medical Association, which frowned upon their continued participation in legitimizing the freak show.

Chapter 4. "The Undiscovered Country Within": Radical Quiet, the Reinterpretation of Interior Monologue, and the Archive of Biracial Women's Lives in *Of One Blood* and *Quicksand*

Introduction

The Connecticut Digital Archives contains a PDF copy of a slim, 16-page booklet entitled "The Circassian Girl: Zalumma Agra, 'Star of the East.' Now on display at Barnum's Museum." Printed in Philadelphia in 1873 as part of Barnum's promotional efforts for the traveling freak show, the text of the volume claims its purpose is to "sketch a brief but concise history" (3) of the Circassian beauty. Instead, it spends most of its time discussing Circassia's isolation:

> In fact, their intercourse with the great family of mankind has been so exceedingly limited that the world at large know but comparatively little of their manners, customs, habits and peculiarities, and save to the occasional tourist, the student, and the historian, Circassia and her people have been as a sealed book. (4)

The concept of an entire region sealed off from the rest of the world is not itself particularly unusual or noteworthy; similar claims have been made about certain indigenous populations and about island nations. But the description of the Circassian beauty's supposed region of origin is the first step in establishing not a "concise history," but instead a mythology for a region that, at least in the pages of this text, is not given the chance to speak for itself. In fact, it is not the region nor the Circassian beauty's voice that resonates in this booklet, but instead the pervasive silence of both.

What is charted in the booklet are the elements that allude to the shape and nature of the region but give scant factual information about either. The text notes the region's

location at 40 degrees north latitude; its "mild and genial" climate; its supposed "stupendous repositories" of "mineralogical and geological" wealth; its developments in science, education, and industry (5); the "horror and desolation of war" (4); the region's brutal history of slavery; and, of course, its history of beautiful women. These details, however, are scant, and they have no source of origin. By page six, the text moves on to what it claims is its real focus: the Circassian beauty herself.

Through the remainder of the booklet, Zalumma Agra is described using language of objectification and wonder, part of the craft of what Robert Bogdan calls the "exotic" mode of freak show presentation (94). In fact, it spends far more time detailing the nature of Zalumma's educational and artistic prowess, her mastery of the English language, and especially the unrivaled beauty of her hair—which the text notes American women are "ready to die with envy of her" because it is so beautiful that "no chignons can imitate and no art can equal" (11)—than it does describing anything of historical note in the region from which Zalumma supposedly originates. As with its chronicling of the region itself, this booklet focuses far more on anecdotal description of Zalumma than it does on established chronology and evidence. As a result, it's clear that building a mythology for Zalumma is its focus: that and ensuring that the people who read it will be interested to see her in person.

The booklet's rich detail about the Circassian region and about Zalumma Agra herself constitutes a sleight-of-hand that is intended to mask the silence that is the foundation of this particular freak show performance. The entirety of the text, first of all, is absent of any dialogue, despite the fact that particular focus and attention is paid at the end of the text to Zalumma's facility with the English language as a vehicle to indicate

her distance from her origins: “she has partially, if not entirely, lost all remembrance of her native tongue; and yet, as has been stated elsewhere in this little sketch, she speaks the language of her adopted land with ease and fluency that would puzzle the most cunning linguist…” (11). But despite the text’s insistence on Zalumma’s fluency, it does not for a moment allow Zalumma to speak for herself. This persistent focus on exposition as the primary vehicle to introduce Zalumma’s story also distracts readers from another pertinent point: the fact that Circassia as depicted in this text is a pure fiction. While the Circassian people do in fact exist, Rieks Smeets notes that the same cannot be said of the Circassian region: “Actually, there is no place such as Circassia; and a single Circassian state uniting all Circassians has never existed in known history” (107).

The combination of Zalumma’s silence and the complete fiction of her origins is no surprise; the text, of course, is part of the propaganda used to bolster the myth and mystery of Zalumma, who, according to Rosemarie Garland Thomson, was likely just one of many local girls hired wherever the sideshow happened to be (*Freakery* 249-250). This utilization of locals is in line with contemporary understandings of “Circassian beauties,” these highly idealized depictions of women of which Zalumma Agra was considered to be one example. Most Circassian beauties were women with very pale white skin and varying shades of hair and eyes, all of which were fairly typical of the Northern Caucasus region where these women supposedly originated but also relatively easy to identify in the American female population. They were also traditionally associated with white supremacy; Winthrop D. Jordan notes that Johann Friedrich Blumenbach named whites “Caucasians” after the region and theorized that Circassians were closest to God’s model for humanity (222-223).

But what makes Barnum's "Circassian beauty" an oddity—and also part of her attraction —is her stylized hair: typically a style where the hair was either naturally composed of dense curls or teased to resemble curls, making the hair stand up around the head like an Afro. The image on the front of the booklet showcases this: it features a photo of a pale-skinned woman with a large shock of dark hair in a halo around her head.[28] Linda Frost, however, notes that the stylization was quickly adopted as fashion even though until that point, it had not been associated with the Circassian beauty and helped to encourage their nickname: "moss-haired girls." That association means the Circassian beauty functions as a bridge between two distinct groups: Frost notes that "The Circassian blended elements of white Victorian True Womanhood with traits of the enslaved African American woman in one curiosity" (68-69).

The 1873 booklet falls just outside of the 1820-1860 window for the concept of "True Womanhood" established by Barbara Welter in 1966 to explain how print culture in particular shaped perceptions of white womanhood in the early to mid-nineteenth century.[29] And, just like Welter's observations—which Mary Louise Roberts notes quickly became "preliminary" because of the work of scholars such as Mary Poovey and Catherine Hall who linked it not just to Puritanism but to distinct patterns of domestic work (151)—Frost's observation linking white womanhood to America's slave culture could easily become a problematic curiosity rather than an analytical tool. It is true that in this hybrid performer, Barnum attempted to capitalize both on the vulnerability of women and on the enslavement of blacks. While the body of the Circassian beauty appears to be white, the hair is styled purposefully to suggest characteristics of blackness, making the Circassian beauty not the pinnacle of whiteness as was its common association, but

instead a racial hybrid. As is the case with most bodies offered up in any way for public consumption, the Circassian beauty, then, much like the body of the conjoined twins, was often treated not as a person, but a metaphor, a landscape upon which a host of conflicting desires and beliefs were inscribed.

But the Circassian beauty was also a person, and one who was not often given the chance to speak for herself. Texts like the 1873 booklet served as a stand-in for the personal speech or narrative of the freak show performer. Regardless of the appearance being fronted by the freaks on stage and the promotional materials populating a region with a particular sideshow narrative, there was still a human being behind the performer who was grappling with identity issues, emotional struggle, and a desire to push back against societal strictures underneath a placid, quiet facade that the freak show performers tried to maintain.[30] The work achieved through that grappling in the quiet, however, has often been lost, because autobiographical materials were rarely produced by the performers themselves.

In this chapter, I argue that the Circassian beauty offers yet another example of how the freak show and its texts model how to read the gaps and flaws in literature to find the stories of those on the margins that are stored there as part of the liberatory archive. I root my argument for this text in part in the Circassian beauty's use of quiet, which I argue provides a model for how we can read interior monologue in literature of the period to uncover hidden narratives.

I begin with a text that might at first seem a strange bedfellow for the Circassian beauty, but that I contend is an important part of this argument. In his book *The Sovereignty of Quiet: Beyond Resistance in Black Culture*, Kevin Quashie talks about a

form of “quiet” that does a similar kind of interior work: his focus, however, is the quiet of black interiority, which he claims is an element often overlooked because of a cultural focus on loud resistance, the dominant framework for reading black culture. That quiet, he contends, is worth exploring, because it is “a metaphor for the full range of one’s inner life” (6). I do not suggest that there is a direct parallel between Barnum’s Circassian beauty and Quashie’s observations about the quiet of black interiority. There is grave appropriative danger in directly applying Quashie’s concept, which is unique to black lives and experiences, directly to white performers who were, whether coerced or not, attempting to masquerade a form of racial ambiguity that is perilously close to blackface. What I propose instead is that the Circassian beauty performs a problematic racial hybridity that shares a kinship with Eva Allegra Raimon's concept of the “tragic mulatta”; that hybridity helps the Circassian beauty cultivate a conflicted model of quiet that uses characteristics similar to those expressed by Quashie to provide a more illuminative reading of two biracial female characters who have often been depicted as victims and who are often styled and situated in positions where performance[31] is a necessity: Dianthe Lusk in Pauline Hopkins’ *Of One Blood* and Helga Crane in Nella Larsen’s *Quicksand.*

It is well known that both Dianthe and Helga are often cast critically as “tragic mulattas.” [32]I argue that both characters, as biracial women navigating between white and black worlds, present many similar and overlapping characteristics of both the tragic mulatta and Barnum’s Circassian beauty, but they do not align fully with either category. Independently, the tropes of the “tragic mulatta” and the Circassian beauty provide a window, albeit a narrow one, into these characters. But when considered together, they serve as a model for how to read the gaps and flaws within interior monologue in these

two novels for new insights into these characters and texts. I argue that, while both Dianthe and Helga demonstrate the sexual vulnerability and link to the legacy of slavery that is the hallmark of the tragic mulatta, they break free of the stereotype and inhabit a distinctly more powerful hybrid space because they also consistently demonstrate a performative quiet that is modeled by the Circassian beauty. If we read the gaps and flaws in Barnum's Circassian beauty booklet just as we read the Fejee mermaid and the freak show ballyhoo—for the obfuscations, the elisions, the things unsaid or missing, the suggestions rather than what is stated outright—we note that the Circassian beauty's model of performative quiet has an audience, cultivates a public narrative, and is an objectified veneer over a complex, secret interiority which becomes a space from which she can observe, reflect, and make decisions that may oppose or affirm cultural expectations. If we read the gaps and flaws in *Quicksand* and *Of One Blood*, that secret interior quiet—as hybrid as Hopkins' and Larsen's characters themselves—is both modeled and revealed in each character's interior monologue. I argue that together, the Circassian beauty's performative quiet and the added nuance of the tragic mulatta lens form a joint model for close reading Hopkins's and Larsen's use of interior monologue, which illuminates a secret interiority and its "radical quiet," the lived experience of biracial women that, unlike Quashie's quiet, is not just "a stay against the dominance of the social world" but an active site of renewal and resistance.

In the end, protagonists in Hopkins's and Larsen's texts are simultaneously victims and figures of complicated resistance, freakish constructions not because they are flawed but because they do not easily align with either cliched trope. In the case of Dianthe and Helga, radical quiet depicts complicated characters at either ends of the personality

spectrum—Hopkins's Dianthe as emotional and chaste and Larsen's Helga as distanced and ultimately sexually charged. Despite their differences, these two characters share a common experience in the ways in which they are both objectified and defy objectification. In the case of both of these early twentieth-century black women writers, radical quiet becomes a key narrative function in each text and a mechanism for identifying and defying stereotype. As a result, while both of these texts do still in many ways enshrine the clichés associated with these tropes, when read through the Circassian beauty's model of quiet, both novels also explode them. I read the fate of both Helga Crane and Dianthe Lusk in each novel's pages as suggestive not just of domination, frailty, and tragedy, but as indicative of a futurity fueled by women's agency and African cultural and historical superiority. As a result, the radical quiet of interior monologue in these texts functions as another mechanism of a liberatory archive; rather than simply enshrining stereotypes, this narrative device archives the complex lived experiences of some biracial women[33] of the era and two biracial characters who have long been viewed through the lens of tragedy and cliché.

The "Tragic Mulatta" and the Problem with Tropes

The trope of the "tragic mulatta" is prominently marked in literature and in the works of both Hopkins and Larsen. Scholars from Hazel Carby to Eva Allegra Raimon to JoAnn Pavletich[34] have noted how the mulatta is a hybrid female figure whose very existence bridges the gap between whiteness and blackness because she represents both sex between the races and the legacy of slavery and it impact on the nation. According to Raimon, the "mulatta" is an essential revisioning of the "tragic mulatto" and is essential

because “the very tragedy of the figure’s fate depends on her female gender.” That gender, she notes, is essential because it imparts on the character a sense of “sexual vulnerability” that is used as a propulsive plot device and as a method to make the reader feel sympathy and outrage. The inherent problem with this mechanism, however, is that in order for it to successfully elicit the desired response from the reader, the character herself must then be offered up as some kind of bodily sacrifice to the needs of the narrative. The result is then routinely a female character trope who must die or be violated in order to fulfill her potential. What makes the “tragic mulatta” trope distinct from the protagonists in sentimental fiction who also often carry this burden, is twofold: the “tragic mulatta” is also a person caught between two worlds, giving her a sense of disorientation, and because of the suggestion of sexual violence in her origins, her violation or death also carries the distinct legacy of the institution of slavery.

In Barnum’s hands, the Circassian beauty became a discomfiting and deeply imperfect double for the tragic mulatta. Like the mulatta, she is a person without a country because her home is clearly a fiction, and no place offers comfort for her hybridity. Like the mulatta, she is an exotic, subject to objectification and wonder rather than substantive human interaction. Like the mulatta, her background appears ambiguous because it is impossible to either confirm or deny whether she has a “single drop of midnight in her veins,” as Sterling Brown’s describes her (Raimon 5). Like the mulatta, her display on stage suggests both a lack of autonomy and vulnerability that hints at a system synonymous with slavery.

The problem then becomes the same that we encounter with most categories of classification and with most literary tropes: the trope becomes a shorthand both to

describe a racially hybrid character and then as a way to look for the clues that consign her to this fate. In other words, a character's emotionalism, or her stoicism, her inability to decide or her decisiveness—any characteristic that she possesses can be used to justify her assignation in this category. Instead, if we look at this trope and its construction as part and parcel of the same kind of performative crafting that Barnum used to create the Circassian beauty, both characters and their associated texts become freaks, hybrids that don't align easily with categorization and that illuminate the possibilities for women's futurity and freedom rather than simply their victimization and downfall.

Quiet Defined

In *The Sovereignty of Quiet*, Quashie discusses DuBois's articulation of double consciousness and the limitations it imposes on black expressiveness. Double consciousness, he says, becomes like a pathology, because black subjectivity cannot escape the publicness of racism, and thus blackness has no interior. There are only two approaches, he says: either submission to racism, or resistance. Quashie, however, disagrees with this assessment. Although much of black culture is analyzed through the lens of active, vocal resistance, he says it can also be examined through quiet. Quashie makes a distinction between quiet and silence, which he says suggests something "motionless and without sound." Unlike silence, quiet, he states, is "actually a quality of expressiveness, just not a public one." That quality, he notes, offers a richness and nuance all its own that holds equal value against the modes of resistance that most people identify and recognize. "The interior," he writes, "is its own integrity and stay against the social world."

This kind of "stay" becomes particularly important for characters such as Larsen's Helga Crane and Hopkins' Dianthe Lusk, in great part because of the difficult situations that both characters find themselves in and in part as well because of the way that much scholarship casts both these texts and these characters. Gordon Fraser notes that much of the criticism of *Of One Blood* can be classified into two categories: either it is a discussion on hysteria, trauma, and incest and new ways of representing African Americans, or it is an exploration of Hopkins' ideas of Pan-Africanism and black liberation (364). Similarly, a great deal of Larsen scholarship, particularly available scholarship on *Quicksand*, can also be classified into two categories as well: either it is material that deals primarily with the complex issues of racial "hybridity" at work in text, particularly in relation to its autobiographical components and its representational issues, or it focuses on Larsen's depiction of sexual objectification and expressions of desire. While these divisions are understandable given the voluminous scholarship available these days on both authors, in this chapter, I am more interested in looking at the intersections between these categories and how they coexist in spaces in the text in the form of radical quiet.

My use of this term includes some of the traditional associations that we have with the word: causing little disturbance; being placid or gentle; being still or muted; but also the idea of something clandestine, secret, or confidential. I also suggest a definition that is a nod to Quashie's term but that also reflects the realities of the hybrid Circassian beauty model and the tragic mulatta. The quiet modeled in conjunction by these two tropes is a quiet that exists behind the moments of objectification and public performance, when the character often reads as publicly silent, and implies not just a stay

against the world, but a place where the characters can resist cultural imperatives and plan next steps. Quiet, then, becomes not just about an absence of sound or speech, but a representation of the conflicted, and ultimately, productive interior life of the two primary characters who often appear to have the most restrictive lives of all: Helga Crane and Dianthe Lusk. But in addition to a full interior life, I also believe that my use of the term radical quiet here indicates also the element of resistance and details how that interiority helps to encourage agency and freedom both for the characters.

The Degradations and Defiance of Quiet

George Hutchinson notes that a great deal of Larsen scholarship in the mid to late 90s had moved from its focus on issues of "hybridity," which he said were all the rage at the time, to discussions of hybridity as a metaphorical representation of other issues that dealt with feminist concerns. Hutchinson then goes on to challenge the idea that racial hybridity or what he calls "biracial subjectivity" (329) is something that should be glossed over or is "untenable or fraudulent" (330); and I largely consider my project here to be picking up somewhat from where Hutchinson leaves off. If we read the gaps and flaws in both texts against the Circassian beauty model of quiet tempered with the tragic mulatta trope, we can see how Hopkins and Larsen use this hybrid radical quiet model most often through interior monologue and associated descriptions to play with stereotype and to illuminate the fact that racial hybridity and biracial womanhood is not, as the tragic mulatta and the Circassian beauty alone would seem to suggest, a cliché. Instead, they illustrate that it is a mask for a complex inner life that often defies, although rarely completely resists, the character's reduction to a bodily object. As a result, Helga

and Dianthe read here not as objects of sexual desire and wonder alone, but as archives of the complex lived experiences of biracial women.

Before she breaks them down, Larsen plays with notions of stereotype and objectification in Helga Crane's introduction in *Quicksand*. When Larsen introduces Helga in the first chapter, she notes that she is alone in her dark room, illuminated with only a single reading lamp. It's clear that Helga is educated; it's also clear that Helga is at first aligned with the exotic because she is, after all, described as surrounded by exotic objects: the lamp makes "a pool of light on the blue Chinese carpet…on the shining brass bowl crowded with many-colored nasturtiums…and on the oriental silk which cover the stool at her slim feet" (5). Not only is Helga surrounded by oriental objects, but also with many-colored flowers, a nod to her biracial birthright even before it is mentioned. Larsen goes on to describe Helga's surroundings as flooded with light but shadowy and Helga as sitting in a spot that was "a small oasis in a desert of darkness" (5). This particular description illuminates the fact that Helga is a perpetual outcast; someone who is both exotic and alone, someone who we are not surprised to learn spends her time in her "own attractive room with her own books" (5). Larsen communicates Helga's intelligence, exoticism and intense isolation in just a few spare words, suggesting that while she sometimes can be cast as an object, she never exists solely in that designation; instead, she inhabits a quiet that is a subtle but powerful mode of communication and encompasses a nuanced interiority.

Larsen's initial description of Helga focuses on how Helga is well-suited to a "framing of light and shade" (5). It's not clear initially what Larsen means by this, but it quickly becomes apparent in her physical description of Helga:

> a slight girl of twenty-two years, with narrow, sloping shoulders and delicate, but well-turned, arms and legs, she had, none the less, an air of radiant, careless health. In vivid green and gold negligee…. deep sunk in the…chair, against whose dark tapestry her sharply cut face, with skin like yellow satin, was distinctly outlined, she was - to use a hackneyed word – attractive (5).

Use of descriptors such as narrow, delicate, and radiant suggest a woman who might be considered conventionally attractive by the contemporaneous standards; the descriptors also share a clear parallel with the kinds of effusive, wonderous descriptions used in the Circassian beauty booklet. But then the text veers to descriptions that align Helga directly with clothing and fabric. The parallel of her clothing - the vivid green and gold negligee - with her "sharply cut" skin like "yellow satin" tells us immediately that Helga's intelligence is less important than her exoticism and less than her supposed value as a material object. The suggestion that her skin is also akin to cloth casts her as a figure who is somehow not human. It also suggests that Helga can be bought and sold as simply as the dress she's wearing. Larsen is representing a particular kind of objectification here. Kimberly Roberts notes that in the 1920s world that Larsen is describing, clothing becomes "a code for discussing not only race, but a number of class, gender, and sexuality issues as well" and emphasizes "interconnections between sexuality, economics, and color" (109). The implication is, as Roberts suggests, not just confined to classifying Helga's clothing as a "text where her morality can be read" or the intimation that, like her clothing, Helga can be purchased, although it is clearly also that as well. This implication is also that Helga's skin color suggests her racial hybridity, her vulnerability, her connection to slavery, and her connection to the tragic mulatta trope.

The description that follows this passage further illustrates the importance the text places on the hybrid nature of Helga's beauty: "Black, very broad brows over soft, yet penetrating, dark eyes…though her nose was good, her ears delicately chiseled, and her curly blue-black hair plentiful and always straying in a little wayward, delightful way. Just then it was tumbled, falling unrestrained about her face and on to her shoulders" (6). By calling attention to the darkness of Helga's brows, eyes, and hair in contrast to her skin but also pointing out her unrestrained hair, the text suggests that not only does Helga share characteristics with the tragic mulatta, but she has more than a passing resemblance to Barnum's Circassian beauty, further linking these two tropes together in a single character.

But Helga Crane is far more than cliché, far more than the tropes used to classify her. While Helga's surroundings and her physical description all suggest that she's being objectified like the Circassian beauty and the tragic mulatta, Helga's character is more complex than aesthetic representation alone. In the next paragraph, the narration shifts from description to interior monologue, which suggests that Helga's thoughts are the true focus here. Helga is not thinking about her skin or her appearance, but instead about her work and school, her arrival in Naxos, and how she's "striven to keep these ends of the days from the intrusion of irritating thoughts and worries" (6). She picks up a book and tells herself she wants "forgetfulness, complete mental relaxation, rest from thought of any kind" (6). With just a few words, Larsen reveals that Helga's intelligence isn't just a trick. She is plagued by thoughts, worries, complexities; she merely wants to retreat and forget, to force herself to hold those thoughts and worries at bay. Much like the description on the first page of the chapter, the world surrounding Helga is dark and

distracting, and when she is allowed to retreat within herself, she is able to forget, to put aside the things that cause her pain, to focus instead on recuperating as an act of self-care. Helga's quiet in these initial scenes speaks volumes; despite the fact that she isn't awarded any dialogue, Larsen illustrates that Helga is objectified and exoticized and that her biracial status means she is caught between worlds, but that underneath the cliché, she's contemplative and actively seeks a respite from the material world. This is the first moment that Larsen shows us that the tropes of the tragic mulatta and the Circassian beauty are merely masks for radical quiet and its complex interiority. It also is far from the last time that Larsen delineates in detail Helga's particular brand of quiet and begins to break down those tropes.

Like Larsen, Pauline Hopkins also subverts these tropes steeped in female objectification in *Of One Blood* by pairing them with evidence of autonomous thought and desire to push back against expected behaviors. And like Helga Crane, Dianthe Lusk, who appears at first blush to be a tragic figure, begins to subvert those tropes even in her introduction in the text. Unlike Helga, Dianthe isn't introduced until the end of Chapter II, primarily because unlike Helga, she is not the protagonist of the novel; that role belongs to her eventual husband, Reuel Briggs. Instead, Dianthe is introduced when Reuel and his best friend Aubrey attend a concert by Fisk performers at the Boston Temple. The men are told by Charlie Vance about the girl with whom he's become infatuated with and how even they will be entranced by her face. And indeed they are: right after the troupe sings the Lord's Prayer, Dianthe rises and "stood in the blaze of the lights with hands modestly clasped before her. She was not in any way the preconceived idea of a Negro. Fair as the fairest woman in the hall, with wavy bands of chestnut hair,

and a great melting eyes of brown, soft as those of childhood; a willowy figure of exquisite mold, clad in a sombre gown of black" (14).

It is significant that Dianthe is presented from the very first as a performer; this immediately aligns her more clearly with the Circassian beauty model than with the tragic mulatta. Unlike Helga, Dianthe is introduced as a paragon of virtue: she is described as modest, fair as a white woman, reminiscent of childhood, and most importantly, unlike any other black person the men had ever seen. There is no suggestion here that Dianthe can be purchased at any cost, unlike Helga, whose very skin is cast as a material object than can be priced and bought. But what is also interesting here is that, unlike Helga, Dianthe is cast as a slave. Like Helga, she is also cast as a figure who is pushing back: the song she sings is "Go down Moses," which is an American Negro spiritual with direct links to abolition and slave resistance. In her first biography on Harriet Tubman, in fact, Sarah Hopkins Bradford notes that the phrase "Go Down Moses" was one that the slaves used as a code with which to communicate when escaping from Maryland (26-27). Dianthe's quiet here is initially more performative than Helga's; Hopkins notes that the Temple where Dianthe was performing had a silence that was "painful" and that Dianthe doesn't wait for silence to ensue again before she begins to sing. It's important to note, however, that while both Dianthe's description and her performative quiet are hallmarks of the Circassian beauty model, she is still outed as black, making the legacy of slavery clear and her tie to the tragic mulatta trope definitive. It's also important to note that Dianthe herself is not speaking or using her own words; she is singing the words of a spiritual. The act of singing a slave spiritual—while masquerading as a public performance for the purposes of audience entertainment—is, in

fact, an indicator that Dianthe's modeling of radical quiet is still in a fledgling state. While interiority is both respite from the solitude of the exterior world and a means of pushing back, for Dianthe, it represents a site of struggle, a place where she is attempting to communicate in code with the outside world about her desire to be free.

As with Helga Crane, Dianthe's complex interiority and silent resistance pushes back against the individual tropes of the tragic mulatta and the Circassian beauty that would consign her to objectification and victimhood; like Helga, Dianthe is more than merely a cliché, and there are moments early in Hopkin's novel that illustrate that Dianthe is showing real attempts to master her situation rather than let it control her. The next time Reuel sees her in Chapter III, he meets her as a ghost on a path while out walking after a dinner party on Halloween at the Vance home. He enters a grove of hemlocks near the home and is possessed with a "restless, unsatisfied longing" (23); then he sees a woman approaching him: Dianthe. Although he is aware of her presence, she sees to look straight through him, and she does speak the first words of hers that he is able to hear: "You can help me, but not now; tomorrow." The time, she says, "is not yet" (24). It isn't until the next day that he is called in to help a woman who has been pulled from a train wreck. That woman, as it turns out, is Dianthe, and Aubrey who brings Reuel in to assist says that it's no use, that she is "cold and stiff" (27).

It's clear that the Dianthe who appeared to Reuel the night before was not the Dianthe of the body, but the Dianthe of the soul; when Dianthe spoke to him, she was transmitting a message to Reuel directly from her consciousness. That message was an echo of Dianthe's interiority, a message from the center of her "quiet," and rather than bowing to Reuel, it gives him instructions and it reinforced a sense of control over him. It

is Dianthe, then, who is the master and ruler in the scene. The simple direction in Dianthe's message becomes even more marked in the hospital scene, when Reuel believes that she is not, in fact, dead as a result of the train wreck, but instead simply existing in a state of "suspended animation." The woman, he states, "has been long and persistently subjected to mesmeric influences, and the nervous shock induced by the excitement of the accident has thrown her into a cataleptic sleep" (29). Reuel's initial reaction to Dianthe in this scene is the fulfillment of his desire from the previous night: he wants to save her, and he realizes now that she has already given him permission to do so.

Just what kind of mesmeric influences Dianthe has been subjected to, Reuel does not say. Nor does he note what the "shock" could have been to put her into such a state. But there are multiple descriptions of her body in this scene as "lifeless" (30) and as possessed of a "clammy brow…icy, livid hands," and "the region of the pulseless heart," and Reuel notes that "no breath came from between the parted lips; the life-giving organ was motionless" (29). From all accounts, Dianthe does indeed appear to be dead. And yet, Reuel brings her back to life. There are several interesting things worth noting in this scene; first is the intimation that if she is not dead, then she is engaging in a kind of performative quiet that follows the model of the Circassian beauty when the performer is attempting to distance herself as far as possible from her audience. Whatever is happening, Dianthe is just as much on stage as she was the night before, but this time, she is not engaging. What's also interesting about this process is that Reuel himself seems to believe that she might not just be in "suspended animation," although that is what he initially diagnosed. In fact, he states later that he is prepared to show the attending

doctors, who all believe Dianthe to be dead, “that in some cases of seeming death - or even death in reality - consciousness may be restored or the dead brought back to life.” It is not clear which category Reuel consider Dianthe to be in. He does follow this declaration with more information about how he has brought dogs back to life once rigor mortis has set in. But the implication—that Dianthe is either deep in a mesmeric trance or is fully dead and must be roused—suggests a profound, performative retreat by a character who has yet to utter a word in real life save in a Negro spiritual about freeing oneself from enslavement.

It’s impossible to link Dianthe to enslavement without making a connection to her real or potential sexual objectification; this, after all, is one of the reasons that the tropes of the tragic mulatta and the Circassian beauty often fit this text so well. As Deborah Horvitz notes, Dianthe’s body represents the site of “the convergence of violence, racism, and misogyny” (245). Not only is she light-skinned—so light, in fact, that she doesn’t even appear to have any black heritage—as Horvitz observes. But that lightness is likely the result of both the rape of her mother and grandmother, a fact alluded to in Reuel’s reference to the fact that when he sees her in the hospital, Dianthe is in “a dual mesmeric trance” (Hopkins 35). The trauma of her past, it seems, is so deep, so profound, that even before the text even allows Dianthe to engage with men in any way that could be perceived as sexual, she is already portrayed as a site of sexual trauma.

But Dianthe both adheres to the depictions that Horvitz references and defies them. For example, Horvitz notes Aubrey’s sexual oppression of Dianthe and that it is in her opinion representative of the white western patriarchy taking over the body of the hybrid female for its own purposes. Horvitz’s reading is largely psychoanalytical; her overall

argument is that Dianthe's hysteria is also linked to the concept of "passive submission to another's desire" (246). This image certainly aligns with our conceptions of the tragic mulatta and with how we tend to view the Circassian beauty culturally: all as women who are bound to their status as victim and also simultaneously to their status as object, and that status, rather than elevating them, instead just makes them code as weak to observers.

If we return to the scene of Reuel's attempt to rouse Dianthe in Chapter IV, it's easy to read the scene as Horvitz does: "Hopkins' renderings of Dianthe's dissociative states imitates accounts of hysteria given in scientific medical journals," she notes (248). But Hopkins' description of the scene suggests that Dianthe is, somewhere in the realm of her radical quiet, in fact exhibiting some masterful control that defies the tragic mulatta and Circassian beauty tropes. First, Reuel touches her "with gentle fingers" to determine her state; he then becomes convinced that "by some mysterious mesmeric affinity existing between them, had drawn him to her rescue, (and) he felt no fear that he should fail" (30). This should not be a surprise because he was directed to help her by no other than Dianthe herself the night before, when she was a specter.

Reuel then takes both of her hands in his left and "passed his right hand firmly over her arms from shoulder to wrist. He repeated the movements several times; there was no response to the passes" (30). The movements here are part of Reuel's attempts to use animal magnetism to revive Dianthe, but given Reuel's future, they also strike as a sign of foreshadowing: they are more than a nod to what Nadia Nurhussein calls "the hand of mysticism," which is a link to Ethiopianist writings through the "biblical hand that stretches forth" and to the city of Telessar, which becomes so important to Reuel's future.

It also parallels Dianthe's ghostly presence; the hand of mysticism shows up first in the scene that introduces readers to the ghost of Mira (280).

Reuel, however, decides soon enough that he needs stronger measures because the "ordinary methods of awakening" won't work. What does finally work to rouse Dianthe is a powder that is "an exact reproduction of the conditions existing in the human body" (33). Although many read this scene as a particular brand of heroism by Reuel, I suggest we read it differently. Not only does it take a special powder rather than traditional measures to rouse Dianthe from her trance, but that rousing also only happens for one reason: because she sent her spirit to Reuel to request his help. Not only is Dianthe the architect of her own salvation, but it's clear that she is also able to break free spiritually from her trance in one form when she chooses. The "dual mesmeric trance" that Reuel believes she is subject to, then, becomes not just a particularly powerful form of mesmerism that holds her in its sway, but also a representation of the dual poles that her hybrid identity allows her to move between. This scene adeptly illustrates both the nearly inviolate power of Dianthe's interiority and of her resistance to victimhood, both of which force a reevaluation of how the tragic mulatta and the Circassian beauty tropes operate differently in tandem than they do alone in this text and both of which suggest my model of radical quiet. This is a moment of liberation for Dianthe's character, although it is often read as evidence of her weakness.

While understanding the push and pull of interiority is key to understanding Hopkins and Larsen, it's also important to understand that "quiet" also illustrates very different characteristics of the protagonists of their novels. Whereas Dianthe's different modes of quiet can be read as modes of resistance against the horrors of the world,

Helga's quiet can be read as somewhat more contemplative and calculating. This is in part because of the way that Helga is figured in the text; even in the first chapter where Helga is introduced, it's clear that she is drawing a distinct line between herself as object and her environment, which she instead characterizes as the object:

> The great community, she thought, was no longer a school. It had grown into a machine. It was now a show place in the black belt, exemplification of the white man's magnanimity, refutation of the black man's inefficiency. Life had died out of it. It was, Helga decided, now only a big knife with cruelly sharp edges ruthlessly cutting all to pattern, the white man's pattern. (8)

Helga's description of the school in this scene is relevant in part because it too is a kind of performance. She does not say this aloud, but thinks it instead; when we pair this thought with what we know about Helga's appearance, we can see how her fierce interiority is at odds with her placid, objectified veneer as with the Circassian beauty model. The description is also relevant because it's giving us insight into a character who, up to this point, has been very quiet; much of Helga's interaction with the world of Larsen's novel at this point has been without dialogue. The quiet here, however, is not the same as voicelessness; this small snippet of interior monologue appears amidst a section of text where Helga has already been ruminating for a considerable amount of time. But what sets this section of interior monologue apart is Helga's ruthless characterization of her school as a tool of whiteness. If Helga is an object for purchase, at least she is not, as she notes of the school, "a machine." The machine, she also points out, has "died"; so not only is it a machine, but it's also something that has lost its soul. It's not difficult to find a parallel here between the machine and descriptions of Dianthe when Reuel finds her after

the train accident. But unlike Dianthe, Helga's school is beyond saving; she notes that it is now a hulking object that is the white man's "show place" and a symbol of black inefficiency.

It's the last line in this excerpt, however, that illustrates the potential and power of Helga's iteration of radical quiet and opens the door for a more comprehensive reading of Helga's materialism. Helga's description of the machine's purpose—which is the knife of the white man ruthlessly cutting out the patterns of people to the white man's form—parallels the image of the women in the paper factory using the "long, glittering scythe" to cut strips of rags down the seams in Herman Melville's "The Paradise of Bachelors and the Tartarus of Maids," which made the air swim "with the fine, poisonous particles, from which all sides darted, subtlety, as motes in sunbeams, into the lungs" (14).

Melville's 1855 text, arguably, was both an implicit endorsement of homosexuality and a bleak subtextual commentary on heterosexual reproduction, what David Harley Serlin notes is a way of restricting women's access to power structures and a narrative that illustrates the "commodification of women's reproductive systems" and how that aligns with the rise of industrial capitalism in the nineteenth century (80). Here, Larsen uses both Melville's legacy and his imagery to skewer not conceptions of reproduction but whiteness. In this case, Larsen is pointing out that for black and biracial people, the element of lived experience that most fundamentally imparts its shape is the effect of whiteness. Still, the connection here to the maids' creative and reproductive process and the fact that the cutting of the fabric in Melville's story creates a poison is particularly telling. It indicates that the cutting of people like Helga in the shape of whiteness is not what is pathological; instead, it is the whiteness itself that is the disease. Through this

lens, it's clear that Helga's objectification and the objectification of other biracial and black women is to be blamed on a society that lauds whiteness in lieu of the bodily integrity of biracial and black women. As a result, Helga's obsession with materialism and the resulting objectification and treatment has little to do with her and her character and everything to do with the inherent problem of a society shaped and governed by whiteness. In this case, Helga's quiet contemplation and reflection on her position and how she got there is a radical act; it produces a distinct awareness of her position in the world and how whiteness has influenced that position.

An examination of Helga's interior monologue offers insights into her thoughts on race and thus a more complex, less cliched understanding of her character, so too does an examination of the dissonance between descriptions of Dianthe and what we can determine from the textual clues offered about her interiority. The descriptions of Dianthe in *Of One Blood* certainly go a long way toward reinforcing Dianthe's vulnerability: she is variously called "like a child," and "hospital waif" and as "weak" (34,39, 64); she is described as lovely and appealing, but as somehow amorphous and unsteady, as if she is a vase that might at any moment tip over and shatter. This characterization of Dianthe is, in part, a way of aligning her again with the tragic mulatta and a way of taking advantage of her autobiographical "quiet" to fill in that space with biased ideas about how we are to read her character. However, I also argue that these descriptions are staging her for some kind of response. Despite her descriptions, Dianthe's responses to the advances of both of the men in her life—Reuel and Aubrey—are anything but passive. In fact, both are distinctly performative in a manner that is consistent with the Circassian beauty model. When Reuel floods her with love, her response is to feel burdened by the knowledge, but

also to give him "in return…a slight, cold affection compared with his adoration" (56). There are no words in Dianthe's response, but there is a clear sense of a boundary hovering somewhere between love and rejection. She doesn't avoid Reuel, and neither does she embrace him; much like the freak show performer with the audience who objectifies her, she just gives him a modicum of what she can manage in the moment. This isn't the same as passivity, however. It is, in fact, a conscious decision to engage, even if Dianthe does, for some reason, keep Reuel at a distance. Just before his departure, she becomes more effusive with him, but that effusiveness doesn't reveal anything but how profound her quiet is and how determined she is to protect her interior radical quiet. Her brief interruptions of her quiet highlight a wisdom and knowledge that speaks volumes: "nothing remains long with us but sorrow and regret. Every good thing may be gone tomorrow - lost!" (65). It's clear in this scene that Dianthe knows a great deal more than she's letting on, knowingly or unknowingly, but her quiet at this point in the text is a refuge she cannot breach, even for Reuel.

As with her interactions with Reuel, Dianthe's interactions with Aubrey are tinged with a performance that moves far beyond mere passive submission. In the final scene in Chapter Eight, Aubrey's coercion is clear: he states that the only way for her to save herself is to listen to his recounting of her story. Just as Hopkins's descriptions of Dianthe are a weak attempt to sketch her character with at least some measure of gendered bias, Aubrey's coercion fills Dianthe's interiority with fear and doubt, attempting to invade and violate the sanctity of her stay against the exterior world. Rather than illustrating Dianthe's weakness, instead it illustrates Aubrey's: his manipulations and attempts to wrest control of Dianthe's behavior are an emotional violation that foreshadows his

physical assault. Still, it's natural that in one sense, readers interpret this scene as Dianthe giving in. She is profoundly afraid that a secret about her will be revealed: "'Did Reuel know that I was a Negress?' "No; no one recognized you but myself' She hid her face in her hands" (68). Dianthe is clearly afraid that Aubrey will tell Reuel that she is biracial. Her response to his cajoling insistence that he has "learned to" love her however, is not just acquiescence: instead, she "sprang back from his touch as if stung" (69). Dianthe may be retreating into quiet in this moment, but her body tells the story for all of us: she does not want to be touched or possessed by this man. When Aubrey continues and says that in order to "possess you I am prepared to save you from the fate that must be yours if Reuel learns of your origin," this is the only point when Dianthe seems to crumple and eventually give in: "In vain the girl sought to throw off the numbing influence of the man's presence. In desperation she tried to defy him, but she knew that she had lost her will-power and was but a puppet in the hands of this false friend" (69).

Nothing in this scene reads as the "passive submission" that Deborah Horvitz suggests. Instead, this is the description of a woman who has been forced into a corner and made to give up, not someone who is passively giving herself over. This is the character following the model of the Circassian beauty who cannot resist the statements of the audience member and who must finally respond. But Aubrey's coercion, represented in the text as a "numbing" influence and resulting in the loss of Dianthe's willpower, can also disturbingly be read as the antidote to Dianthe's passivity. It's highly doubtful that Hopkins is purposefully suggesting rape as an antidote to a woman's resistance, but Dianthe is also being figured as sexually frigid, sexually traumatized, and thus as a hysteric, a designation that marks her as a gendered object to a degree that

borders on the pathological. Indeed, Horvitz notes that Hopkins, as a follower and contemporary of philosopher and psychologist William James, would have known quite well about "Freud's theory that repressed sexual trauma underlies hysteria" (247). In this case, Dianthe's silence becomes both the place to which she can retreat and, temporarily at least, a prison to which she is consigned.

While the force of sexual desire and violation and the resulting effects illuminate how radical quiet in these two texts can function both as prison and retreat, they also construct a vision of biracial womanhood that is constantly objectified by early twentieth century society. For Helga—until the text's later chapters—sexual desire is largely subsumed unless she is being objectified by others, much like the Circassian beauty model when engaged in performance. That objectification, which like Dianthe's borders on the pathological, begins first with Helga's clothing. In her article on the symbolics of prostitution in *Quicksand*, Kimberly Roberts writes that Helga is figured in part as a prostitute in the text, and that this figuring characterizes her as both victim and diseased because of the associated cultural attitudes linked to the figure of the female prostitute in the early twentieth century, which casts Helga "only as an object/victim, not an agent/subject, in this economic relationship" (108). In Chapter Six, however, when Helga is seeking work in Chicago, she begins by dressing "herself carefully, in the plainest garments she possessed" (34). Helga here is trying her best not to attract attention; in fact, she's trying to actively avoid the kinds of attention that Roberts describes because she's trying to get a legitimate job. But later in the chapter, much like the Circassian beauty who always dressed in traditional period clothing, Helga attracts attention anyway: "She traversed acres of streets, but it seemed that in that whole energetic place nobody wanted

her services. At least not the kind that she offered. A few men, both white and black, offered her money, but the price of the money was too dear. Helga Crane did not feel inclined to pay it" (37). The implication, of course, is that the men were soliciting Helga for sex, and it seems no coincidence that she was being solicited by men of both races. Helga, because of her dark hair and light skin color, is caught in the middle; her biracial status casts her as a hybrid who is constantly requested to be a sexual mediator between races, even as she attempts to inhabit a space of radical quiet and remove herself from consideration. Roberts notes Helga's precariousness in this moment: "by assuming the role of a 'street walker,' she almost becomes one" (111). But Roberts' point about Helga's precariousness is undermined a hair by the confidence in Helga's response. Helga does not indicate any fear or worry when confronted by multiple men; in fact, she simply does not "feel inclined" to respond to them at all. Instead, her radical quiet gives her a measure of remove and confidence that helps to combat both male objectification and the subsequent pathologization that results from their classification of Helga as either a prostitute or a weakling.

Much like the Circassian beauty, Helga's approach to radical quiet becomes something of an extended performance. Helga's quiet resistance also continues to bleed into her other interactions throughout the course of this novel and, in particular, to her articulations of race. Larsen notes that Helga "hated white people...but she aped their clothes, their manners, and their gracious ways of living" (51). Despite her hatred, she wants to be like them in order to bolster her measure of protection. Helga also begins to dream of going to Copenhagen where "there were no Negroes, no problems, no prejudice" (58). Indeed, this is true of Copenhagen: when Helga arrives in Chapter

Thirteen, she is pampered and told that she should "have bright things to set off the color of your lovely brown skin. Striking things. Exotic things. You must make an impression" (70). Helga is dressed by her family in all manner of exotic, beautiful clothing, which in turn makes Helga feel like "a veritable savage" and causes people to stare at her on the streets since she is so unusual looking. This description shares more than a passing resemblance to the Circassian beauty's mode of display; her loveliness, her victimhood, and her pervasive silence are all the things that attract the audience. Helga's loveliness and relative silence are apparent to the Danes she meets; what's less apparent is her supposed victimhood. But her aunt, Fruh Dahl, makes its clear as they prepare for her tea and dinner: "what a prim American Maiden you are, Helga, to hide such a fine back and shoulders" (70). For Fru Dahl, Helga's modesty is symptomatic of a problem and thus Helga's insufficiency. Because this attitude is markedly different than that of America in the 1920s, where even Helga's modest clothing still elicits solicitation on the street, it contributes to Helga's difficulty in negotiating a sense of cultural stability and necessitates her continued retreat into her space of radical quiet. Even Roberts notes Helga's desire for retreat into quiet; she writes that, in scenes such as this one in *Quicksand* which are grappling with the intersection of fashion and sex, Helga "continually attempts to negotiate the line between the respectable and its opposite and in doing so to create a space for herself that is free from essentializing categorization yet acknowledges some form of female sexuality" (112). This space, of course, isn't physical; because it is so difficult for her to find her cultural footing in the midst of such a dramatic continental shift, Helga retreats inside herself. Helga's interiority is her space of refuge and resistance, but it is ably chronicled in the interior monologue that Larsen uses

to detail the characteristics and interactions of the Danes who surround her and her thoughts about them.

There are a number of examples of Helga's character-revealing interior monologue modeled after the Circassian beauty's performativity and bolstered by the sexual vulnerability of the tragic mulatta. One particularly strong one is featured in the scene where Helga attends dinner with her aunt and uncle and is objectified by virtually everyone in attendance. Dinner, notes Helga, garners her even more attention than tea did. Because of the green velvet dress which her aunt had cut down to "practically nothing but a skirt" and her bracelets, earrings, beads, and rouge, none of which she was accustomed to wearing, Helga is the center of attention, the Circassian beauty centerpiece showcased for the entertainment of a gaggle of wealthy Danes:

> No other woman in the stately pale-blue room was so greatly exposed. But she liked the small murmur of wonder and admiration which rose when Uncle Paul brought her in. She liked the compliments in the men's eyes as they bent over her hand. She liked the subtle half-understood flattery of her dinner partners. The women too were kind, feeling no need for jealousy. To them this girl, this Helga Crane…was not to be reckoned seriously in their scheme of things. True, she was attractive, unusual, in an exotic, almost savage way, but she wasn't one of them. She didn't at all count. (72)

Reading the gaps and flaws in this scene for evidence of the Circassian beauty model tinged by the tragic mulatta is particularly fruitful. This scene highlights several standard features that comprise many of Helga's experiences in Denmark. First, Helga is objectified, but she also somewhat enjoys the experience; she is both centered and

"exposed," a prop at the center of the dinner party who, like the Circassian beauty and other featured freak show performers, is upheld as the room's only exotic. But unlike Barnum's depictions of the Circassian beauty, Helga's quiet is reflective of interior complexity: she likes the compliments she receives from the men and is receptive to the women's kindness while also maintaining her awareness of how they have disregarded her.

What marks this scene as a site of Helga's objectification, however, isn't just the compliments she receives but also the ways in which Helga is discussed by attendees: the murmurs of "wonder and admiration," a distinct connection to the tone of the biographical pamphlet that Barnum used to advertise the Circassian beauty. Objectification is also present in the ways in which quiet manifests both in the description of the scene and in Helga's observations, and that quiet is different than much of the quiet that Helga has been observed engaging in previously in the text. The men here, for example, are offering her compliments with their eyes, not their mouths. Implicit in that suggestion is not only that they cannot bridge the gap established by her status as centerpiece feature for the party but that she would not understand their words and that their words are likely not appropriate for voicing. In addition, the women's kindness in this scene is never articulated in the form of dialogue, which suggests that they are showing their kindness in action or behavior. Instead, it is detailed by their thoughts, which summarily dismiss Helga. As a result, in this scene Helga is, in fact, not placed on a pedestal like the Circassian beauty, nor is she viewed as a site of sexual violation and conquest like the tragic mulatta; instead, she becomes a specimen who is found deficient by both groups.

Helga's treatment as a specimen is only magnified when Herr Axel Olsen enters the scene. His interest in her immediately marks her as object and as somehow deficient. In his very first interaction with her, instead of talking to her, he instead talks about her as if she's incapable of speech: "'Yes, you're right. She's amazing. Marvelous,' he muttered" (73). From all outward appearances, Helga is completely silent, but the text details her shrewd observation of his response: she cannot think of a proper word to greet his observation, but she does want "badly, to laugh." Axel, however, doesn't observe her response at all; instead, his words "flowed on and on, rising and rising…. She caught only words, phrases, here and there. 'Superb eyes…color…neck column…yellow….hair…alive….wonderful'" (73). Once again, Helga is reduced to object, to specimen, but Axel compounds that reduction by enforcing her silence and magnifying her quiet in an attempt to reduce her to parts.

When Axel finally proposes to her, he does so in a manner that continues to reduce her from person to a pile of objects. He tells her he is making a present of himself, and then when she doesn't immediately say yes, he continues and tells her that "you have the warm impulsive nature of the women of Africa, but, my lovely, you have, I fear, the soul of a prostitute. You sell yourself to the highest buyer. I should of course be happy that it is I. And I am" (89). Helga's response, which is that she is not for sale to any white man and doesn't want to be owned, is both a nod to the legacy of slavery and a refutation of the stereotypes often associated with the Circassian beauty and tragic mulatta tropes. By verbalizing her independence, Helga is making both audible and visible how her relative quiet up to this point has not indicated acquiescence, but instead represents a site

where Helga has constructed a complex inner life, has engaged in plans to assert herself, and continues to resist her reduction to object.

The Disruptions and Dislocations of Quiet

Jeanne Scheper writes in *African American Review* that in part, *Quicksand* chronicles the policing of black women's movements and that Larsen's narrative "opposes the containment of any given place and any given social location against the expansiveness of acts of movement and relocation." Scheper notes that Helga represents something often thought impossible: a woman who is also the "quintessential figure of modernism: the flaneur" who strolls and observe modern life. In doing so, writes Scheper, she becomes a character through whom we can examine the "relationship of subjectivity to relocation and mobility" (679).

Scheper's argument about Helga's mobility is also critical to my argument because I see it as another manifestation of the ways in which *Quicksand* and *Of One Blood*, when read in conjunction with Quashie's concept of quiet and with Raimon's tragic mulatta, utilize interior monologue in a manner consistent with the model of quiet interiority the Circassian beauty displays. Not only do I see evidence of Helga's physical movements as crucial to detailing her subjectivity in Larsen's text, but I also see the ways in which the mobility of the characters helps collapse in the boundaries of their radical quiet interiority throughout the course of each novel. This collapse often simultaneously facilitates their objectification and illustrates how both characters are representative of either women's futurity or African cultural and historical superiority.

Helga's radical quiet and its cool resistance, for example, begins to collapse when her silent space of reserve is temporarily invaded by desire in *Quicksand*. After her kiss with Dr. Anderson, which leaves her with desire "burn(ing) in her flesh with uncontrollable violence" (110) and Dr. Anderson's regret over the incident, Helga becomes enraged because she realizes that she's kept distance so long that the first time she allows herself to feel desire it becomes all-consuming. Frustrated, cold and wet from the rain, and desperate, she hears music from a "store" and enters to find it filled with people who are "singing a song which she was conscious of having heard years ago - hundreds of years it seemed" (111). The song about "showers of blessings" combined with the moaning of the church members and the unending song cause Helga to weep; in a moment, a woman pulls her coat from her back and Helga is revealed to be wearing a "clinging red dress" and "bare arms," which causes shock among the parishioners. The woman even calls her a "scarlet 'oman'" and a "'los' Jezebel" (113).

At first, Helga is merely a spectator, amused and entertained by this scene; this is, in fact, her typical reaction to many of the incidents in the text in which she finds herself at a careful remove. She studies the scene and does not react externally, instead opting to reveal her thoughts and motivations through interior monologue and description. But in this scene, something else happens that shifts Helga's reactions from interior to exterior. The performance of the church members, Helga notes, is one of "Bacchic vehemence"; as she watches, her amusement changes to fear, and then to something else: "gradually a curious influence penetrated her; she felt an echo of the weird orgy resound in her own heart; she felt herself possessed by the same madness; she too felt a brutal desire to shout

and to sling herself about." Although she attempts to escape, she cannot. Instead, she begins to yell and the crowd responds:

> Arms were stretched toward her with savage frenzy. The women dragged themselves upon their knees or crawled over the floor like reptiles, sobbing and pulling their hair and tearing off their clothes. Those who succeeded in getting near to her leaned forward to encourage the unfortunate sister, dropping hot tears and beads of sweat upon her bare arms and neck. (115)

The language in this scene is clearly depicting not just religious zeal. If we read the gaps and flaws here, we read a coded description of an orgy of sexual excitement: parishioners are ripping their clothes off in a frenzy, crawling "like reptiles" across the floor, and dripping tears and sweat on Helga's bare skin, which makes the scene more reminiscent of a Hieronymus Bosch painting than a staid religious ritual. It is little surprise, then, that we can read the parishioner's description of Helga as both a "scarlet 'oman" and a "scarlet omen," a significant symbol of an important shift in the narrative. Here, Helga's boundaries collapse; she becomes objectified performer and sexually vulnerable, Circassian beauty and tragic mulatta, all in one.

And indeed, this scene becomes a critical pivot for Helga's character: in the wake of this event, Helga experiences a "miraculous calm" and "felt within her a supreme aspiration toward the regaining of simple happiness, a happiness unburdened by the complexities of the lives she had known" (115). That simplicity manifests in her marriage to Reverend Mr. Pleasant Green. The "confusion of seductive repentance" (119) is a clear expression of religion as a vehicle for expressing the sexual desire spurred by Helga's interaction with Dr. Anderson and that Helga cannot bring herself to give in to

permanently without the bounds of marriage. Religion floods Helga's cool, quiet reserve, breaking down the barriers that serve as a stay against the world for Helga and fill her with a need for a different kind of life than the one she's been living. Helga argues to herself that this is her reformation, a pursuit of a life that isn't just rooted in things but instead in what she calls "really living." But if we read the gaps here, we can see that the shift from a life of materialism to a life rooted in family is both a way of enacting revenge on Dr. Anderson for his rejection and Helga's attempt to use movement to enact change as she has throughout her life.

This shift, however, is fundamentally different than the ones before: previously, when Helga made a change in her life, she maintained the stay against the world and protected her radical quiet, holding the world at a cool remove as an observer and chronicler of modern life. But when she moves to Alabama, her interiority shifts dramatically: she becomes less critical of people, instead viewing everyone as lovely; she is less focused on material objects. Most of all, her nights are dominated by sexual intercourse: "emotional, palpitating, amorous, all that was living in her sprang like rank weeds at the tingling thought of night, with a vitality so strong that it devoured all shoots of reason." (123). Helga's interior landscape has been populated by clutter and has become devoid of reason; in steering Helga towards marriage as the only resolution for her sexual repression and her desires, religion has flooded Helga's radical quiet with elements that intimate not possibility and hope, but foreboding.

In Chapter Twenty-Three, the ramifications of Helga's decision and the foreboding becomes clear; her performance has earned her a permanent position, one that, like the Circassian beauty's, necessitates a secret interiority covered by an

objectified bodily veneer. Kimberly Monda notes that Helga's "sudden release from the self-sacrifice of sexual repression propels her into a nightmare of domestic self-sacrifice" (23); even more than domestic self-sacrifice, however, is the implication of bodily sacrifice that contains echoes of Larsen's nod to the plight of the maids in "The Paradise of Bachelors and the Tartarus of Maids." Helga mentions that she never considered her body "save as something on which to hang lovely fabrics" (124) but now she had to constantly think of it. The body, instead of just functioning as a hanger for clothes, again becomes ruthlessly cut to the white man's pattern by consigning a smart, capable women to domesticity and motherhood alone. But more even than simply Helga's domestic self-sacrifice is the conceit about motherhood that details Helga's continual breaking down, much like the description of the rags being rent in Melville's text. "The children used her up," notes Larsen; as a result, Helga now views her life now "in helpless dismay and sick disgust at the disorder around her." Save moments when Helga replaces her internal stays with the bolster of religion, the disintegration of her subjectivity continues with the birth of her next child. Because her interior quiet has been turned over to desire, Helga discovers that she must let her subjectivity flow into a new space, a retreat that is not a place of reflection but one of escape, a space between awake and asleep that affords the only relief from her domestic tedium: "she hovered for a long time somewhere in that delightful borderland on the edge of unconsciousness, an enchanted and blissful place where peace and incredible quiet encompassed her" (79).

When reading the ending of Larsen's text within this context, it appears that Helga has been consigned to a life of domestic disaster; the text ends with the description of her recovering from the birth of her fourth child only to begin having her fifth.

However, Larsen's use of interior monologue in this chapter, which is consistent with its use throughout the text, illustrates that exactly the opposite is true. In each instance in the text before Helga considers fleeing one culture and moving into another, the preceding chapter or chapters operate as vehicle chapters. They contain considerable interior monologue that makes that tension and that consideration manifest, which in essence does the work of rapidly transporting character development and interiority in advance of a larger environmental or landscape shift. Helga's recognition of unhappiness and contemplation of change is always evident, and the same is the case in this final chapter of the text. Helga recognizes her own "oppression" and notes that she will not allow it to continue: "in some way she was determined to get herself out of this bog into which she had stayed. Or-she would have to die She couldn't endure it." Helga is also intuitive enough to recognize that this feeling is clearly aligned with previous experiences: "Something like it she had experienced before…this differed only in degree. And it was of the present and therefore seemingly more reasonable. The other revulsions were of the past, and now less explainable" (135). We, of course, cannot know what Larsen intended Helga's fate to be outside of the bounds of the narrative. Monda contends that Helga becomes "lost in escapist fantasies" that allow her to "remain the object of (her husband and children's) desires rather than the subject of her own" (37). But I argue that there is, in fact, another reading of this scene: rather than considering her fifth pregnancy the end of Helga's life, if we look at the structure of the narrative that Larsen maintains throughout *Quicksand,* we may also read it as an opportunity, the final element that will spur Helga to have an abortion, to leave the Reverend, or, like Dianthe, to see death as the ultimate escape. Women's agency may not be explicitly detailed in the conclusion of

Larsen's text, but its possibility exists, and thus Helga's fate remains in flux rather than being predetermined. What is clear is that if anyone is going to save Helga, it is going to be her and her alone.

Dianthe, too, experiences the collapse of boundaries in her space of radical quiet, but in a far different way than does Helga. While Larsen gives us a consistently close read on Helga's thoughts or her movements, Dianthe moves from page to page of Hopkins's text much like the ghost of Mira; in some chapters, she is ever-present, a slowly weakening figure beside the traitor Aubrey; in others, she is a name on Reuel's lips or a specter that haunts a scene because of her likeness to Queen Candice of Telessar. Dianthe's spectral presence carries with it the undeniable evidence of the state of her subjectivity; just as Helga's character was a site of sexual repression and unleashed desire, Dianthe's is the site of sexual trauma and its lingering effects. Much of this characterization has to do with the continual trauma inflicted by Aubrey's compulsive sexual desire and the ramifications of the fact that he is also her sibling. While Shawn Salvant notes that incest is critical to "the novel's themes, structures, and political purposes," it's important to note that, as Salvant also points out, it's not incest alone that causes reader discomfort but what the incest between Aubrey, Reuel and Dianthe represents: the legacy of slavery and the "tangled interracial genealogy" (659) that the institution created.

To put this more frankly, however, is to note that the trauma that Dianthe experiences at Aubrey's hand is twofold: it is both the intense sexual trauma of a woman raped by someone she thought was a friend, and a reminder of the rape of black enslaved women by the white men who enslaved them. When considered through this lens,

Hopkins's narratorial voice at the beginning of Chapter Two becomes a mocking one: the idea of "the passing of slavery" from the country becomes an utter fiction because the legacy of its sexual violence cannot be erased, and the vision of a country that "as one man…heaved a deep sigh of absolute content" (11) is clearly a coded reference to a deeply divided land that cannot reconcile its differences and so instead merely ignores them, much as Twain chronicled in *Pudd'nhead Wilson*.

Dianthe's degradation at the hands of Aubrey is clear in the text, but her disappearance is a mere narrative shift, like the switching of people in and out of the role of Circassian beauty; her likeness to Queen Candace is no coincidence, and it sets up an interesting commentary on the incomplete enactment of female agency in the vision of Pan-African futurity that Hopkins's texts offers. For Reuel, Candace presents a likeness of Dianthe that is both remarkable and irresistible: her shoulders, bust, grace, and face are all linked to Dianthe, but Candace features one thing that Dianthe clearly does not, even though Reuel does not yet know it: "she seemed the embodiment of all chastity" (84). Candace is the vision of Dianthe uncorrupted by Aubrey, by slavery, by white men. This is where Reuel envisions his future, in a world where a version of Dianthe can exists that has not been degraded by the outside world. Candace is, in a sense, the embodiment also of Dianthe's interiority, pure and unblemished.

The problem with this, however, is that the real Dianthe must die in order for Reuel to find this perfect match, and it facilitates the texts unsettling suggestion that the only way that women can exist in this world is as disposable models of perfection. Ai, Reuel's guide through Telessar, clearly notes that this is sometimes necessary: "when the body of a good man or woman dies, and the Ego is not sufficiently fitted for the higher

condition of another world, it is reassociated with another body to complete the necessary fitness for heaven" (131). It is unlikely that Dianthe is considered ready for heaven; instead, she is aligned with Candace. It is also worth noting that there are no instances in the text when this situation is applied to men.

Beyond the character of Dianthe, the disposability of women is a consistent theme in Hopkins's text. Candace is referenced several times as a statue; the text notes clearly that the Queen is always chosen from a group of women with the same name; the bodies of Telessar's most beautiful women are preserved after death like dead flowers. This disposability of the feminine only furthers the idea of subjective collapse and Dianthe's mobility and eventual erasure in the text, which is depicted as a fitting sacrifice in order to preserve both the history and the future of the city of Telessar. And yet Dianthe's death, while seemingly inevitable and in some ways earned, also feels incomplete; if she is indeed housed in Candace, then she has been reborn in a way that indicates her resilience beyond even what Reuel is capable.

It is this dual reading of the conclusion of *Of One Blood* that recalls how persistently and effectively both this text and *Quicksand* operates in a hybrid space. Unlike the previous texts under study here, these two texts are written by black women, and they're examining the experiences of being black and biracial from a much closer vantage point, which illustrates how effective liberatory archive is at housing stories from a diverse authorship. Although the tropes of the tragic mulatta and the Circassian beauty can easily be pressed against these two texts as if they're templates, they function instead not as stereotypes, but as a joint model for a kind of quiet that illustrates how we can read the gaps and flaws in these texts, particularly within interior monologue, to excavate the

stories of biracial women's subjectivity and experience. In the hands of Larsen and Hopkins, Helga Crane and Dianthe Lusk serve as two complex representations of black and biracial womanhood. Although certainly not "master narratives of the race" (DuCille 6-7), the texts themselves offer one vision of a future that provides biracial women with more autonomy. The texts themselves are of course imperfect, but rather than simply viewing them as broken or faulty, by analyzing how they utilize narrative elements from the Circassian beauty and tragic mulatta model to provide insight into inscrutable characters, we can also recognize how the texts operate as archives of the stories of marginalized people that often remain hidden. The hybridity of these texts is also a keen reminder that the liberatory archive is a space constantly in a state of evolution and change, and so is our understanding of the texts that help to comprise it.

[28] For an image of Zalumma Agra on the booklet cover, see Appendix E.
[29] Welter notes that "woman, in the cult of True Womanhood presented by women's magazines, gift annuals, and religious literature of the nineteenth century, was the hostage in the home" (151).
[30] I use the word "tried" here because sometimes the nature of the audience and its response to performers made it difficult for performers to keep silent, even though that was the expectation. Rachel Adams notes that "the spectacular structure of live performance (was) often ruptured by unexpected behavior of audience members or performers. These are unintended – sideshow format is orchestrated by the spieler's authoritative monologue and the freak's silence is designed to impede such contact" (67).
[31] When I use this term, I'm using it primarily to mean the enacting of a role in front of an audience and less the socially-constructed process of subject formation through repetitive actions over time in the vein of Judith Butler.
[32] This contention goes back to Jo Ann Pavletich and Hazel Carby and, Pavletich contends, is "inextricably tied to the rhetoric of True Womanhood" (647).
[33] Ann DuCille notes in *The Coupling Convention: Sex, Text, and Tradition in Black Women's Fiction* that although we tend to look at texts written by black women as somehow authenticating the black woman's singular experience, that's a dangerous assumption. No single piece of African American literature, she argues, can be treated as "discursively familiar, as faithful representations of lived experiences in the social real" (11). They can instead be treated as "artifice and artifact" and as representative of the conditions of the time. I soften my argumentative language here accordingly to reflect that Larsen and Hopkins do not represent the experiences of all biracial women, but they simply archive the narratives of some of them.
[34] Extensive critical discussion has been devoted to the "tragic mulatto" and the "tragic mulatta," from Sterling Brown's insistence that both are "unrealistic, non individualized, and unoriginal" (Sollors 223) to Hazel Carby's claim that the mulatta is "a narrative device of mediation" (171) Eva Allegra Raimon's definition suggests that the "tragic mulatta's" tragic fate depends very much on her gender and on her ability to "drive plot forward because of her sexual vulnerability" and the "destructive potential of the slave system to the heroine's very survival" (5-6)

CHAPTER FIVE. Conclusion

When I began this project in 2016, I began with a photograph of a Circassian beauty one that I found on eBay. The photo was an image of a woman with a Mona Lisa-like smile, the right side of her face cast in darkness, the left in the light. I look at that photograph a lot; even now, it seems to be looking toward both beginnings and endings. The photo has long seemed a symbolic representation of my project. It represents both what is both visible and hidden about the freak show, and about literature. I spent four years on this project exploring that tension. I spent four years arguing for the freak show's function as an archive of marginalized lives and stories, four years using the freak show and its texts as a model for close reading the gaps and flaws in literature to discover more of those stories so that I could make the case for the existence of a holistic liberatory archive. My goal was to show how this often-maligned institution (and rightly so) could also do some good: I wanted people to see that what many people considered the freak show's flaws could be used as an analytical tool to help literary studies read well-known texts in new ways. I also wanted to show how the freak show and literary studies could together highlight a model of archive already in existence that both disability studies and archival studies have been moving towards, one that encompasses more of the stories of people from the margins who are often overlooked.

Since this project's inception in 2016, however, a great deal has changed in my personal life, in my life as a scholar, and in the world at large. The photo of the Circassian beauty has come not just to represent the identification of a liberatory, and thus more representative, archive, but also the fracture that one experiences when one is a woman and a scholar in the academy, when one is a creative writer and a scholar, when

one is a scholar and a parent, when one is a citizen of the current world. That admission might strike some as strange. Sometimes we scholars are told that personal memoir—no matter how pervasive its presence in and influences on the landscape of literature and scholarship—should be minimized or muted in scholarly work. I would argue, however, that any attempts to separate our personal stories from our academic scholarship are not only misguided but impossible. Right now, I write this version of my conclusion from my table at home, where I'm cut off from my aging parents who have been my source of childcare throughout my PhD program, where I'm isolating with my young children, both out of school, because a virus called COVID-19 is wreaking havoc on every single system that humanity has set up to attempt to categorize and control the chaos of the world. The world, of course, as it often does, has its own ideas; we haven't seen a virus kill this many people, force this many people into isolation and quarantine, and shut down entire cities, states, and countries in this manner in over 100 years. So here I sit, writing the fifth version of this conclusion, because every earlier version that did not mention this fact, that ignored this new reality in favor of a simple recap of my argument, felt disingenuous at best and downright dishonest at worst. To not acknowledge my state as a human being in this utterly extraordinary situation felt like ceding to one of academia's most problematic paradoxes: the reality that academia routinely sending woman-identifying scholars into the archives to seek out and relay the histories and narratives of the objects they find hidden there while simultaneously encouraging them to suppress their own histories and narratives. This paradox, we know, becomes even more fraught when the women in question are, as Kimberle Crenshaw notes, "multiply-burdened" (140) by a race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability or

other identity category that pushes them farther to the margins of an imagined societal norm.

Acknowledging the fractured humanness that underlies my scholarly work is not an indulgence or a distraction; instead, it is a perfect, practical example of my dissertation argument migrating into praxis. Just as the freak show provided a template that encouraged me to engage in a rigorous, creative form of literary analysis that I believe helped me to identify the stories of marginalized lives and experiences already present in a variety of canonical (and often imperfect) American texts, the current chaos of the world provides a model for understanding my own fractured sense of self as a scholar, mother, teacher, woman, and writer.

There is, of course, considerable precedent for the blending of memoir and scholarship. One of the scholarly landscapes of which I consider myself a resident is disability studies, and in disability studies, the personal has long been intermingled with the scholarly. Scholars from Rosemarie Garland Thomson to Michael Bérubé to Lennard J. Davis to Rachel Adams have woven their life into their scholarly work because they believe that their investment in disability studies is intrinsically linked to their bodies and lives. Too, there is plenty of precedent in the humanities at large for this knitting together of memoir and scholarship, albeit primarily by established (read: tenured) scholars. In her book *Black Gotham: A Family History of African-Americans in Nineteenth-Century New York*, for example, scholar and professor Carla Peterson chronicles her research into her family at the Schomberg Center for Research in Black Culture. Peterson frames each chapter as an item or event of importance in relation to her great-grandfather and then, like a scrapbook, lets "the work of memory, history, and archival discovery guide me

through my narrative" (28). She sutures together research into the lives of black New Yorkers from 1795 to 1895 with anecdotes about her trips from archive to archive, with questions, both unanswered and answered, that her research generates, and with speculation about what lies outside the tidbits of information she finds. The result, notes Peterson, is "not exactly a family memoir, but neither is it traditional social history. It is a narrative that lies somewhere in between" (6). The in-betweenness of *Black Gotham*, states Peterson, is primarily because of the nature of the process of remembering: "nations and other communities…hold onto memories of people and events they deem historically significant," she notes. "These memories lay the groundwork for group identity." As a result, she writes, "we need to think of remembering—whether undertaken by individuals or collectives—as a dynamic process, an act of imagination." (9). Peterson's contemplation of the nature of remembering shows just how important a tool personal narrative can be both for understanding and interpreting individual and collective lives and knowledge. Her articulation of remembering as a dynamic process and an act of imagination—which mimics more broadly the methodological steps of liberatory archive—highlights how personal narrative can help us to reconsider not only the past, but can provide a new lens through which we can understand the present and the future.

There are also examples of this mingling of memoir and scholarship in my very scholarly backyard. One of the reasons I wanted to work with my chair, Marion Rust, is because of her understanding of and acknowledgement of this; in her 2015 *Legacy* essay "Personal History: Martha Ballard, Laurel Thatcher Ulrich and the Scholarly Guise in Early American Women's Studies," Rust notes that "the two beings Ulrich identifies—

the "guise" and the "life"—are in an important sense one. For as is true of any lastingly significant scholarship, this author's first- person-free academic prose is rich with self-investment" (147-148). Time and again, as I have made my way through this project, I have returned to this essay and to this larger point: that even in the absence of first person, the self-investment persists.

In the absence of first person, the self-investment persists. This feels like a larger commentary on my current relationship with the world as I sit in isolation. I watch; I observe; I recognize that just as the world has its own ideas of how to manage the growing chaos of COVID-19; so, too, does the archive. Here, again, Rust's *Legacy* essay is deeply relevant: scholarship, she notes, benefits greatly from the kind of intellectual engagement and work that is reminiscent of "slogs through muddy terrain"; "as such," she says, "all archive-based scholarship—and not just that by or about women—is in its way a form of 'Women's Work.' It profits not only from attention to the seeming mundanities of past worlds but also from similar awareness regarding one's own cumbersome state of being" (161). Right now, there are scholars everywhere like me, women and those who identify as such in particular, who are writing papers, finishing dissertations, crafting arguments while struggling to juggle their distinct and often disparate societal roles—ones particularly weighted at this moment with the histories of elderly parents and vulnerable friends and demanding children—under what may be the most significant public health disaster of their lifetimes. At this moment, we are all deep in the archives, doing this particular kind of "women's work," whether we like it or not.

Early in this conclusion, I stated what I believe my "women's work" on this project has accomplished, as well as what I've learned through this process about my

identity as a scholar. Throughout the course of this project, I identified how an institution traditionally associated with exploitation actually served as one model for how literary studies can make its canon more inclusive, not only by being more open to the texts it chooses to designate as canonical, but in the methods it uses to read the texts that are already there. I also articulated how the reparative archive that archival studies seeks and the holistic archive that disability studies seek are actually one and the same, and that they are a liberatory archive that focuses not only on filling gaps or flaws but also on more closely reading the stories that are already there.

But I also acknowledge that I did not expect to write this conclusion through the lens of a global pandemic, and I cannot escape that fact. And so, naturally, this conclusion reads with considerably more personal narrative than much of my other writing in this dissertation. This pivot feels both necessary and right. It feels so in part because where I see this study going from here on out is centered in the personal. I've come to the conclusion that continued work on this argument would be well served by seeking out additional research on how scholars are utilizing personal narrative in their scholarly work. After researching and studying a host of disability and archival studies scholars, I've seen a number of diverse scholars finding innovative and critically useful ways to integrate personal narrative into their scholarly writing. I see exploring this avenue as both a natural argumentative step given the nature of this project and as a natural writerly one: if I am truly going to honor and respect the groups on the margins that I've been writing about, it's important for me to reflect critically on my own position as a white woman, as a queer woman, as a woman parenting a child with a disability.

But the personal plays more of a role than merely the examination of the impact of my own multiple identities on my scholarship. I also feel called to continue to work toward liberatory archive as praxis. In addition to expanding this project into a monograph, I am beginning to put together a long-term plan to assemble a digital archive that will feature the kinds of objects and texts produced by marginalized lives, the kinds of objects and texts that are so often overlooked or lost. I believe this project will continue to hone my scholarly focus, to push me to work with even more patience and rigor, to see the ways in which the personal informs my work as a vital part of the process of building academia's liberatory archive. This is an ambitious plan, a long-term plan for life past my Ph.D., but given the state of the world, it feels important to set those kinds of goals, particularly goals that allow me to continue to engage in the largely isolated act of writing and the act of chronicling the small personal moments that occur alongside it. Most of all, I'll continue to return to that image of the Circassian girl to animate my critical focus. I will continue to use that image as scholarly reminder, as Ummni Khan notes, to never cease to "rummage through the muck of patriarchy to find props, words, costumes and scripts that can be transformed into empowering, subversive, and pleasurable tools" (349).

Appendix A

"Fejee Islands Mermaid" advertisement, *The Charlestown Mercury*, 1843. The New York Public Library, Rare Books and Manuscripts Division. From P.T. Barnum papers, MssCol 215, b. Used with permission of The New York Public Library.

GRAND EXHIBITION!!!
WONDERS OF NATURE!!!

WILL be exhibited at Masonic Hall, corner of King and Wentworth streets, from **This Day, the 17th inst. to Saturday the 21st inst.**, from 9 o'clock, A. M. till 10 P. M., that most wonderful object of creation the real "MERMAID," taken near the Fejee Islands, and whose recent exhibition in New York, Boston, Baltimore, Washington, &c. &c., has utterly dispelled the doubts of thousands and thousands of naturalists and other scientific persons regarding the real existence of such an animal! Also will be exhibited the ORNITHORYNCUS, from New Holland, OURANG OUTANG, &c.!!! Also will be exhibited, FANCY GLASS BLOWING!!! by the celebrated and unrivalled Beizoni Davidson, who makes in the presence of his visitors, ships, dogs, stags, birds of paradise, or any form the fancy may dictate, without the help of mould or instruments. The articles made are for sale.

Admission 50 cents. Children under 12 half price.

P. S.—Day visitors to the above admitted to the following Evening Exhibition, without extra charge.

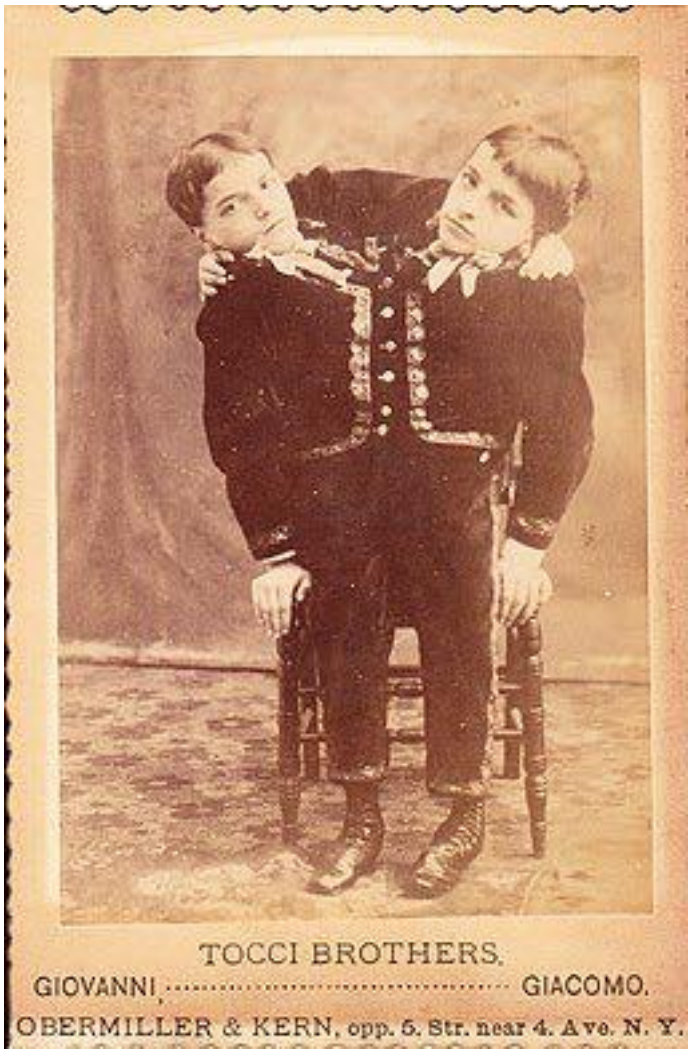
GRAND ATTRACTION!!!

Mr. WYMAN, the unrivalled VENTRILOQUIST AND MAGICIAN!!! will give a great variety of his humorous specimens of that peculiar faculty, and introduce a most laughable colloquy with an inanimate block of wood, commonly called the **Automaton Speaking Figure!!!** He will also perform many astonishing **Feats of Magic!!!** Signor VERONIA, who has acquired great celebrity in various kingdoms in Europe and recently in the Eastern cities of the United States, will exhibit his splendid **Italian Fantocini**; or Mechanical Figures, representing human life. Performance commences at half past 7 o'clock.

Admission to all the above 50 cents, children under 12 half price. 5 Jan 17

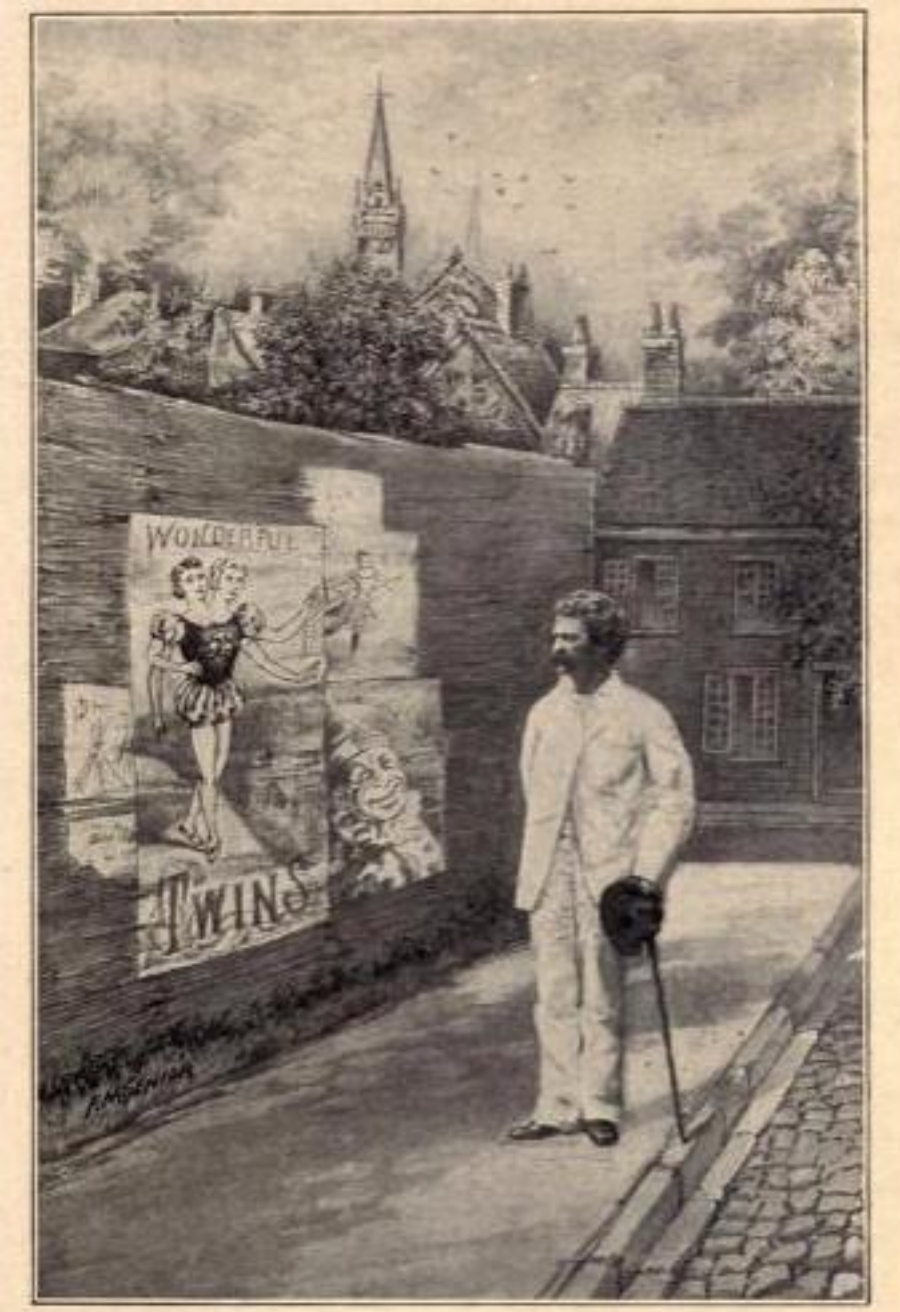
Appendix B

Obermiller & Kern (name on the card) Dr. Jan Bondeson (* 17. December 1962) (name often associated with this photograph, ex. here. He wrote 2000 the book *The Two-Headed Boy, and Other Medical Marvels* about the topic and there used the picture. He didn't take the photo as he was not alive while Giovanni Battista and Giacomo Tocci (* 4. Oktober 1877 in Locana; † 20. Century) were children. / Public domain; cited according to public domain stipulations.



Appendix C

From page 209 in the 1922 Harper & Brothers Publishers Illustrated edition of *Pudd'nhead Wilson and Those Extraordinary Twins*.

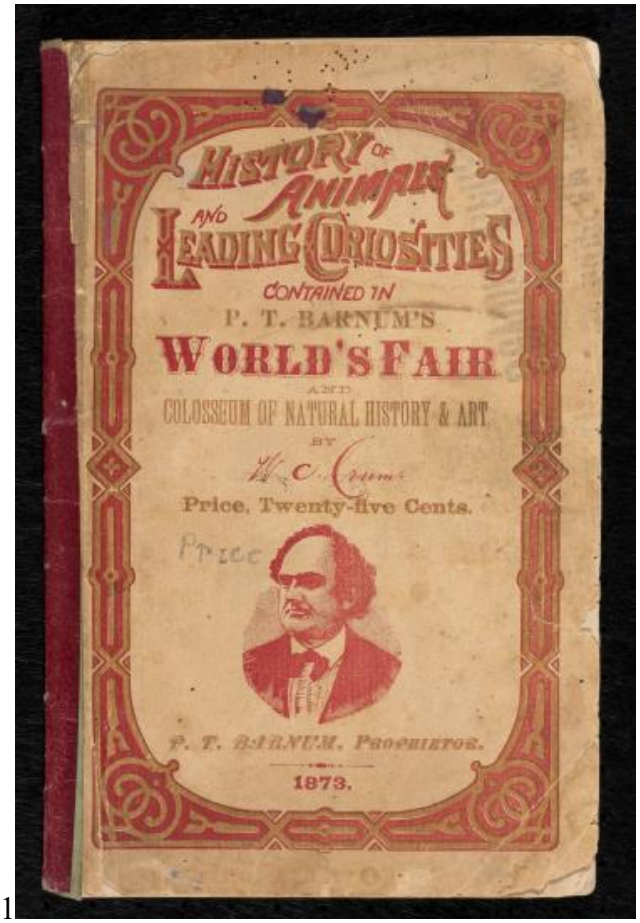


I THOUGHT I WOULD WRITE A LITTLE STORY

Appendix D

D1: Cover of “History of Animals and Leading Curiosities Contained in P.T. Barnum’s World’s Fair And Colusseum of Natural Art & History by W.C. Crum,” 1873. Part of the Barnum Museum’s P.T Barnum Digital Collection at the Connecticut Digital Archive. Identifier: 2003.009.019

D2: “A Man Born Without Arms,” Pg. 79, “History of Animals and Leading Curiosities Contained in P.T. Barnum’s World’s Fair And Colusseum of Natural Art & History by W.C. Crum,” 1873. Part of the Barnum Museum’s P.T Barnum Digital Collection at the Connecticut Digital Archive. Identifier: 2003.009.019

D1 

D2

MUSEUM CURIOSITIES. 71

MECHANICAL SINGING BIRDS.

PERFECTLY natural and life-like, it being impossible to detect the notes or movements of the birds from the sweetest living nightingale or canaries. A diminutive piece of mechanism is enclosed within the natural skin and feathery integument of the most exquisitely plumed of the tiny songsters, by means of which the delicate little warblers trill their dulcet notes, which are perfectly rapturous and enchanting.

A MAN BORN WITHOUT ARMS.

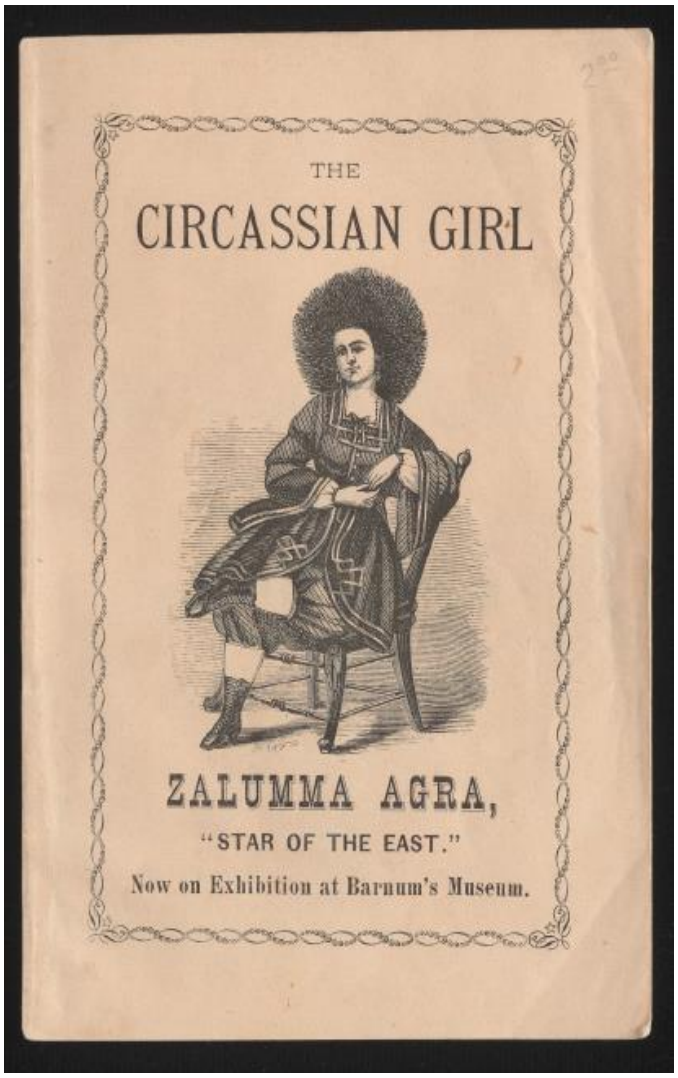
CHARLES B. TRIPP, Esq., the young man represented in the picture, performs with his feet and toes many "unhandy" things with a dexterity truly marvelous. He eats, drinks, whittles, sews, makes change, figures, writes, ciphers, and keeps perfect accounts of all transactions with a facility almost equal to an expert chirographer.

ANCIENT ARMS.

SWORDS, maces, lance, missiles, long and broad swords and shields, arrows, darts, quivers, and many weapons of personal combat and international warfare used by the Ancient Greeks and Romans, Persians and Hindoos.

Appendix E

Cover of "The Circassian Girl: Zalumma Agra, “Star of the East,” 1873. Part of the Barnum Museum’s P.T Barnum Digital Collection at the Connecticut Digital Archive. Identifier: PTB-am-bb005



Bibliography

Adams, Rachel. *Sideshow U.S.A: Freaks and the American Cultural Imagination.* Chicago: U of Chicago, 2001. Print.

Adler, Melissa. *Cruising the Library: Perversities in the Organization of Knowledge*. Fordham University Press, 2017. Print.

Ammons, Elizabeth. "Going in Circles: The Female Geography of Jewett's The Country of the Pointed Firs." *Studies in the Literary Imagination*, vol 16, no. 2, Fall 1983, pp. 83-92.

Ashe, Bertram D. *From Within the Frame: Storytelling in African-American Fiction*. Routledge, 2002. Print.

Azzarello, Robert. *Queer Environmentality: Ecology, Evolution, and Sexuality in American Literature*. Farnham: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2012. Print.

Barnum, Phineas T. "Mr. Barnum on Museums." *The Nation*, August 10, 1865. Print.

——. *The Life of P.T. Barnum.* New York: Redfield, 1855. Print.

——. *Struggles and Triumphs: Or Forty Years' Recollections of P.T. Barnum Written by Himself.* Buffalo: Warren, Johnson, 1872. Print.

Beale, Thomas. *A few observations on the natural history of sperm whale: with an account of the rise and progress of the fishery, and of the modes of pursuing, killing, and "cutting in" that animal, with a list of its favourite places of resort.* London: Effingham Wilson, 1835. Print.

Berkson, Dorothy. "Mark Twain's Two-Headed Novel: Racial Symbolism and Social Realism in *Pudd'nhead Wilson*," *Studies in American Humor*, New Series 2, vol. 3, no. 4, Winter 1984-85, pp. 309-320.

Berlant, Lauren. *Intimacy.* The University of Chicago Press, 2000. Print.

—— and Michael Warner. "Sex in Public." *Critical Inquiry*, vol. 24, no. 2, Intimacy, Winter 1998, pp. 547-566.

Bérubé, Michael. "Against Subjectivity." *PMLA*, 11:5, pp. 1063-1068. Print.

——. *The Secret Life of Stories: From Don Quixote to Harry Potter, How Understanding Intellectual Disability Transforms the Way We Read.* New York: NYU Press, 2016. Print.

Bogdan, Robert. *Freak Show: Presenting Human Oddities for Amusement and Profit.* The University of Chicago Press, 1988. Print.

Bombaci, Nancy. *Freaks in Late Modernist American Culture: Nathanael West, Djuna Barnes,Tod Browning, and Carson McCullers.* New York: Peter Lang, 2006. Print.

Bondeson, Jan. *The Fejee Mermaid and Other Essays in Natural and Unnatural History*. Ithaca and London, Cornell University Press, 1999. Print.

Bradford, Sarah Hopkins. *Scenes in the Life of Harriet Tubman*. W. J. Moses, Printer, 1869. Print.

Brooks, Van Wyck. *The Ordeal of Mark Twain*. London: William Heinemann, 1922. https://www.gutenberg.org/files/42225/42225-h/42225-h.htm.

Carby, Hazel V. "The Quicksands of Representation: Rethinking Black Cultural Politics." *Reconstructing Womanhood: The Emergence of the Afro-American Woman Novelist.* New York: Oxford University Press, 1987: 163-175.

Child, Lydia Maria. *Hobomok: A Tale of Early Times*. 1824.

Crain, Caleb. “Lovers of Human Flesh: Homosexuality and Cannibalism in Melville’s Novels.” *American Literature*, vol. 66, no. 1, New Melville, March 1994, pp. 25-53.

Crenshaw, Kimberle Williams. 1989. “Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics.” *University of Chicago Legal Forum*, 1989, pp. 139–67.

Davis, Lennard J. *Enforcing Normalcy: Disability, Deafness, and the Body.* Verso, 1995. Print.

——., ed. *The Disability Studies Reader*, fourth edition. Routledge, 2013. Print.

de Baecque, Antoine. *The Body Politic: Corporeal Metaphor in Revolutionary France,* 1770-1800. Stanford University Press, 1997. Print.

Derrida, Jacques and Eric Prenowitz. “Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression.” *Diacritics*, Vol. 25, No. 2 (Summer 1995), pp. 9-63. Print.

Dowdell, Coby. “Withdrawing From the Nation: Regionalist Literature as Ascetic Practice in Jewett’s The Country of the Pointed Firs,” *Legacy: A Journal of American Women Writers*, vol 21, no. 2, 2004, pp 210-228.

DuCille, Ann. *The Coupling Convention: Sex, Text, and Tradition in Black Women’s Fiction*. Oxford University Press, 1993. Print.

DuBois, W.E.B. *Black Reconstruction in America: Toward a History of the Part Which Black Folk Played in the Attempt to Reconstruct Democracy in America, 1860-1880*. Routledge, 2017 (orig Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1935). Print.

Duneer, Anita. “Sarah Orne Jewett and (Maritime) Literary Tradition: Coastal and Narrative Navigations in ‘The Country of the Pointed Firs’.” *American Literary Realism*, vol. 39, no. 3, spring 2007, pp. 222-240.

Eden, Edward and Dee Goertz, eds. *Carol Shields, Narrative Hunger, and the Possibilities of Fiction*. University of Toronto Press, 2003. Print

Edinger, Edward F. *Melville’s Moby Dick: A Jungian Commentary: An American Nekiya*. New Directions Publishing Corporation, 1978. Print.

Fahy, Thomas. *Freak Shows and the Modern American Imagination: Constructing the Damaged Body from Willa Cather to Truman Capote.* N.p.: Palgrave MacMillan, 2006. Print.

Farge, Arlene. *The Allure of the Archives*. Yale University Press, 2013. Print.

“Fejee Islands Mermaid” advertisement. *The Charlestown Mercury*, 1843. P.T. Barnum papers, MssCol 215 b, The New York Public Library, Rare Books and Manuscripts Division, New York, NY. 19 March 2016.

Fiedler, Leslie A. *Freaks: Myths and Images of the Secret Self.* Simon and Schuster, 1978. Print.

Flippin, Percy Scott. *The Archives of the United State Government: A Documentary History, 1774-1934.* Washington DC: Division of Research, National Archives, 1938. Print.

Foner, Eric. *Reconstruction: America’s Unfinished Revolution, 1863-1877.* New York: Harper & Row, 1988. Print.

Forbes, Robert Pierce. *The Missouri Compromise and its Aftermath: Slavery and the Meaning of America.* The University of North Carolina Press, 2007. Print.

Foulke, Robert. *The Sea Voyage Narrative.* New York: Twayne, 1997. Print.

Fraser, Gordon. "Transnational Healing in Pauline Hopkins's Of One Blood; Or, The Hidden Self." *Novel: A Forum On Fiction*, vol. 46, no. 3, pp. 364-385.

Frost, Linda. *Never One Nation: Freaks, Savages, and Whiteness in U.S. Popular Culture, 1850–1877*. University of Minnesota Press, 2005. Print.

Galton, Francis. *An Inquiry Into Human Faculty and Its Development.* New York: Macmillan, 1883. Print.

——. *Hereditary Genius: An Inquiry Into Its Laws and Consequences.* New York: Macmillan, 1869. Print.

Garland-Thomson, Rosemarie. *Extraordinary Bodies: Figuring Physical Disability in American Literature and Culture.* Columbia University Press, 1996. Print.

——. ed. *Freakery: Cultural Spectacles of the Extraordinary Body.* New York: New York UP, 1996. Print.

——. *Staring: How We Look*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2009. Print.

Gerber, Amanda J. *Medieval Ovid: Frame Narrative and Political Allegory.* Palgrave Pivot, 2015.

Gillman, Susan. "'Sure Identifiers': Race, Science, and The Law in Pudd'nhead Wilson." *Mark Twain's Pudd'nhead Wilson: Race, Conflict and Culture*. Duke University Press, 1990.

Goheen, Cynthia J. "Rebirth of the Seafarer: Sarah Orne Jewett's The Country of the Pointed Firs." *Colby Quarterly*, vol. 23, issue 3, article 7, September 1987, pp. 154-164.

Haelle, Tara. “Identity-first vs. person-first language is an important distinction.” *Covering Health: Monitoring the Pulse of Healthcare Journalism.* The Association for Health Care Journalists Center for Excellence in Health Care Journalism. July 31, 2019. https://healthjournalism.org/blog/2019/07/identity-first-vs-person-first-language-is-an-important-distinction/.

Haraway, Donna. “Situated Knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspectives.” *Feminist Studies* 14:3 (1988) pp. 575-599. Print.

Heller, Terry. “Eunice and the Jade Gods: Jewett’s Religious Rhetoric in A Country Doctor.” *Legacy: A Journal of American Women Writers*, vol. 22, no. 2, 2005, pp. 158-175.

“History of Animals and Leading Curiosities Contained in P.T. Barnum’s World’s Fair And Colusseum of Natural Art & History by W.C. Crum,” 1873. The Barnum Museum, P.T Barnum Digital Collection, The Connecticut Digital Archive. Identifier: 2003.009.019. http://hdl.handle.net/11134/60002:1075.

Holmes, Oliver W. “Archives and Records Management Resources.” National Archives, Archives Library Information Center, 1964.

Horvitz, Deborah. “Hysteria and Trauma in Pauline Hopkins’ Of One Blood; or, the Hidden Self.” *African American Review*, vol. 33, no. 2, Summer 1999, pp. 245-260.

Hopkins, Pauline. *Of One Blood: Or, The Hidden Self.*

Hughes-Watkins, Lae’l. “Moving Toward a Reparative Archive: A Roadmap for a Holistic Approach To Disrupting Homogeneous Histories in Academic

Repositories And Creating Inclusive Spaces for Marginalized Voices." *Journal of Contemporary Archival Studies*, vol. 5, article 6, pp. 1-17.

Hutchinson, George. "Nella Larsen and the Veil of Race." *American Literary History*, vol. 9, no. 2, Summer 1997, pp. 329-349.

Hume, Beverly. "Mark Twain's Mysterious Duplicate in Pudd'nhead Wilson," *Nineteenth-Century Literature*, vol. 68, no. 1, June 2013, pp. 90-112.

Isman, Felix. *Weber and Fields: Their Tribulations, Triumphs, and Their Associates*. Boni & Liveright, 1925. Print.

Jackson, Holly. "'So We Die Before Our Own Eyes": Willful Sterility in The Country of the Pointed Firs. *The New England Quarterly*, vol. 82, no. 2, June 2009, pp. 264-284.

Jardin, William. *The natural history of the ordinary Cetacea or whales.* Edinburgh: W.H. Lizars, 1837. Print.

Jewett, Sarah Orne. *The Country of the Pointed Firs.* New York: Houghton, Mifflin and Company, 1896. Print.

Jimerson, Randall C. *Archives Power: Memory, Accountability, and Social Justice*. Society of American Archivists, 2010.

Jordan, Winthrop D. *White Over Black: American Attitudes Toward the Negro, 1550-1812*. University of North Carolina Press, 1968. Print.

Khan, Ummni. "Let's Get It on: Some Reflections on Sex-Positive Feminism." *Women's Rights Law Reporter*, vol. 38, no. 3-4, Spring-Summer 2017, pp. 346-354. HeinOnline.

Koelb, Clayton. “Some Problems of Literary Taxonomy.” *Canadian Review of Comparative Literature*, vol. 4, no. 3, Fall 1977, pp. 233-244.

Larsen, Nella. *Quicksand.* New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1928. Print.

Luciano, Dana and Ivy G. Wilson, eds. *Unsettled States: Nineteenth Century American Literary Studies.* New York University Press, 2014. Print.

Machado, Carmen Maria. *In the Dream House*. Graywolf Press, 2019. Print.

Manhoff, Marlene. “Theories of the Archive from Across the Disciplines,” *Libraries and The Academy* 4:1 (2004) pp. 9-25. Print.

Matthiessen, F.O. *American Renaissance: Art and Expression in the Age of Emerson and Whitman.* Oxford University Press, 1941.

McCullough, Joseph B. and Donald Malcolm. “Mark Twain’s Creation Myths: ‘Captain Stormfield’ and ‘Letters From The Earth.’” *Studies in American Humor*. New Series 2, vol. 5, no. 2/3, Summer/Fall 1986, pp. 168-176.

Melville, Herman. *Moby-Dick; or The Whale.* New York: Harper & Brothers, 1851. Print.

——. “The Paradise of Bachelors and the Tartarus of Maids.” *Harper's Magazine*, April 1855. Accessed via Electronic Text Center, University of Virginia Library. https://msuweb.montclair.edu/~furrg/i21/par-tar.html.

Miller, Pamela A. *And the Whale Is Ours: Creative Writing of American Whalemen*. David R. Godine, Publisher, and The Kendall Whaling Museum. 1979. Print.

Mitchell, David T., and Sharon L. Snyder. “Exploitations of Embodiment: Born Freak and the Academic Bally Plank.” *Disability Studies Quarterly*, vol 25, no. 3, 2005, n.p. Web.

——. *Narrative Prosthesis: Disability and the Dependencies of Discourse.* Ann Arbor: U of Michigan, 2001. Print.

Monda, Kimberly. "Self-Delusion and Self-Sacrifice in Nella Larsen's Quicksand." *African American Review*, vol. 31, no. 1, Spring 1997, pp. 23-39.

Newman, Louise Michele. *White Women's Rights: The Racial Origins of Feminism in the United States.* Oxford University Press, 1999. Print.

Newman, Simon P. "Reading the Bodies of Early American Seafarers." *The William and Mary Quarterly*, vol. 55, no. 1, 1998, pp. 59–82.

Nielsen, Kim E. *A Disability History of the United States.* Beacon, 2012. Print.

Nurhussein, Natalie. "The Hand of Mysticism: Ethiopianist Writing in Pauline Hopkins's Of One Blood and the Colored American Magazine." *Callaloo*, vol. 33, no. 1, Ethiopia: Literature, Arts & Culture, Spring 2010, pp. 278-289.

O'Connell, Catherine. "Resecting Those Extraordinary Twins: Pudd'nhead Wilson and the Cost of Killing Half." *Nineteenth Century Literature*, vol. 57, no. 1, June 2002, pp. 100-124.

O'Toole, James M. "Democracy - and Documents - in America," *American Archivist* 65, Spring/Summer 2002. Print.

Parker, Hershel and Henry Binder. "Exigencies of Composition and Publication: Billy Budd, Sailor and Pudd'nhead Wilson." *Nineteenth-Century Fiction*, vol. 33, no. 1, Special Issue: Narrative Endings, June 1978, pp. 131-143.

Parrish, Susan Scott. "Rummaging / In and Out of Holds." *Early American Literature* 45.2 (2010) pp. 261-74. Web.

Pavletich, JoAnn. “Pauline Hopkins and the Death of the Tragic Mulatta.” *Callaloo*, vol. 38, no. 3, Summer 2015, pp. 647-663.

Peterson, Carla L. *Black Gotham: A Family History of African Americans in Nineteenth-Century New York City*. Yale University Press, 2012. Print.

Poole, Ralph J. “Cannibal Cruising: or ‘to the careful student of the Unnatural History of Civilization.’” *Amerikastudien/American Studies,* vol. 46, no. 1, Queering America, 2001, pp. 71-85.

Powell, Douglas Reichert. *Critical Regionalism: Connecting Politics and Culture in the American Landscape.* The University of North Carolina Press, 2007. Print.

Pratt, Lloyd. “Historical Totality in the African American Archive.” *Unsettled States: Nineteenth-Century American Literary Studies.* NYU Press, 2014. pp. 55-75. Print.

Price, Tammy I. “The Language of Herbs: An Analysis of Subtext in Sarah Ome Jewett’s The Country of the Pointed Firs.” Published Master of Arts Thesis, University of Northern Colorado, 1998.

Puar, Jasbir K. *Terrorist Assemblages: Homonationalism in Queer Times.* Duke University Press, 2017. Print.

Punzalan, Ricardo L. And Michelle Caswell. “Critical Directions for Archival Approaches to Social Justice.” *The Library Quarterly*, vol. 86, no. 1, January 2016, pp. 25-42.

Quashie, Kevin Everod. *The Sovereignty of Quiet: Beyond Resistance in Black Culture.* New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers UP, 2012. Print.

Quetelet, M.A. *A Treatise on Man and the Development of His Faculties*. Edinburgh: William and Robert Chambers, 1842. Print.

Raimon, Eva Allegra. *The "tragic mulatta" Revisited: Race and Nationalism in Ninteenth-Century Antislavery Fiction*. Rutgers University Press, 2004. Print.

Reiss, Benjamin. *The Showman and the Slave: Race, Death, and Memory in Barnum's America.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 2001. Print.

Roberts, Kimberly. "The Clothes Make the Woman: The Symbolics of Prostitution in Nella Larsen's Quicksand and Claude McKay's Home to Harlem." *Tulsa Studies in Women's Literature*, vol. 16, no. 1, Spring 1997, pp. 107-130.

Roberts, Mary Louise. "True Womanhood Revisited." *Journal of Women's History*, vol. 14, no. 1, Spring 2002, pp. 150-155.

Rohloff, Jean. "'A Quicker Signal': Women and Language in Sarah Orne Jewett's 'The Country of the Pointed Firs'." *South Atlantic Review*, vol. 55, no. 2, May 1990, pp. 33-46.

Rust, Marion. "Personal History: Martha Ballard, Laurel Thatcher Ulrich and the Scholarly Guise in Early American Women's Studies." *Legacy: A Journal of American Women Writers*, vol 32, no. 2, 2015, pp. 147-166. Print.

Salvant, Shawn. "Pauline Hopkins and the End of Incest." *African American Review*, vol. 42, no. 3/4, Fall-Winter 2008, pp. 659-677.

Samuels, Ellen. *Fantasies of Identification: Disability, Gender, Race.* New York: NYU Press, 2014. Print.

Sanchez, Reuben. "Mark Twain, Hank Morgan, and Menippean Satire in 'A Connecticut Yankee.'" *Studies in American Humor*. New Series 3, no. 15, 2007, pp. 19-43.

Savage, Elizabeth. "What We Talk About When We Talk About The Dick." *Feminist Teacher*, vol. 21., no. 2, 2011, pp. 91-109.

Scheper, Jeanne. The New Negro Flâneuse in Nella Larsen's "Quicksand." *African American Review*, vol. 42, no. 3/4, Fall-Winter 2008, pp. 679-695.

Serlin, David Harley. "The Dialogue of Gender in Melville's 'The Paradise of Bachelors and the Tartarus of Maids.'" *Modern Language Studies*, vol. 25, no. 2, Spring 1995, pp. 80-87.

Smeets, Rieks. "Circassia." *Central Asian Survey*, vol. 14, no. 1, 1995, pp. 107-125.

Smith, Jay E. "Thomas Paine and The Age of Reason's Attack on the Bible." *The Historian*, Vol. 58, No. 4 (Summer 1996), pp. 745-761.

Sollors, Werner. "Excursus on the "Tragic mulatto"; or, The Fate of a Stereotype." *Neither Black Nor White Yet Both: Thematic Explorations of Interracial Literature.* New York: New York University Press, 1997. 220-245.

Southward, Daniel. "Frame Narratives and the Gothic Subject," *The Dark Arts Journal*, vol. 1, no. 1, pp. 45-53.

Springhall, John. *The Genesis of Mass Culture: Show Business Live in America, 1840 to 1940.* New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008. Print.

Steedman, Carolyn. *Dust: The Archive and Cultural History.* Rutgers University Press, 2001. Print.

——. "Something She Called a Fever: Michelet, Derrida, and Dust," *American Historical Review*, vol.106, no. 4, October 2001, pp. 1164.

Steffen, Charles G. "Newspaper for Free: The Economies of Newspaper Circulation in the Early Republic," *Journal of the Early Republic*, vol. 23, no. 3, Autumn 2003, pp. 381-419.

Szilagyi, Charlotte. “Framed! Encountering Otherness in Framed Narratives.” PhD Diss. Harvard University, 2010.

Taylor, Diana. *The Archive and the Repertoire: Performing Cultural Memory in the Americas.* Durham: Duke University Press, 2003. Print.

Taylor, Mark Lloyd. “Ishmael’s m(O)ther: Gender, Jesus, and God in Melville’s Moby-Dick.” *The Journal of Religion*, vol. 72, no. 3, July 1992, pp. 325-350.

“The Circassian Girl: Zalumma Agra, Star of the East.” 1873. The Barnum Museum, P.T Barnum Digital Collection, The Connecticut Digital Archive. Identifier: PTB-am-bb005. http://hdl.handle.net/11134/110002:2330.

Thoreau, Henry David. *Walden.* Boston: Ticknor and Fields, 1854.

Toles, George. “Mark Twain and *Pudd’nhead Wilson*: A House Divided." *NOVEL: A Forum on Fiction*, vol. 16, no. 1, Autumn 1982, pp. 55-75.

Twain, Mark. “Personal Habits of the Siamese Twins.” *Packard’s Monthly*. August 1869. n.p.

——-. *The Tragedy of Pudd’nhead Wilson and the Comedy of Those Extraordinary Twins.* Hartford: American Publishing Company, 1894. Print.

——-. *Pudd’head Wilson and Those Extraordinary Twins*. New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1922. Print.

Van Tassel, David D. *Recording America’s Past*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1960. Print.

Wall, Kathleen. “Frame Narratives and Unresolved Contradictions in Virginia Woolf’s ‘A Room of One’s Own’.” *Journal of Narrative Theory*, vol. 29, no. 2, Spring 1999, pp. 184-207.

Warner, Michael. *The Letters of the Republic: Publication and the Public Sphere in Eighteenth-Century America.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1990. Print.

Weinstein, Cindy. *The Literature of Labor and the Labors of Literature: Allegory in Nineteenth-Century American Fiction.* Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1995.

Welling, William. *Photography in America: The Formative Years, 1839-1900*, University of New Mexico Press, 1987.

Welter, Barbara. "The Cult of True Womanhood: 1820-1860." *American Quarterly*, vol. 18, no. 2, part 1, Summer 1966, pp. 151-174.

Whitman, Walt. "When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom'd." *Sequel to Drum-Taps*. Brooklyn: Peter Eckler, 1865.

Wiebe, Robert H. *The Search for Order, 1877-1920.* New York: Hill and Wang, 1967. Print.

Withers, Charles J. W. "Constructing the Geographical Archive," *Area* 34:3 (2002), pp. 303-311. Print.

Wu, Cynthia. *Chang and Eng Reconnected: The Original Siamese Twins in American Culture.* Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2012. Print.

VITA

Megan Pillow
(formerly Megan Pillow Davis)

EDUCATION

Ph.D. in English Expected May 2020
University of Kentucky (Lexington, KY)
Dissertation Title: "Freakish Taxonomies: How the American Freak Show and its Literature Redefine the Archive"
Committee: Marion Rust (chair), Michelle Sizemore, Frank X Walker, Carol Mason

M.F.A. in Creative Writing (fiction) May 2001
The University of Iowa Writers' Workshop (Iowa City, IA)
Thesis Title: "The Gosh-Darn Truth and Other Stories"
Committee: Chris Offutt (supervisor), Marilynne Robinson, Frank Conroy

B.A. in English May 1999
Hanover College (Hanover, IN)

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Graduate Instructor, Creative Writing Spring 2020
English Department, University of Kentucky

Instructor, Creative Nonfiction Winter 2020
Stanford Continuing Studies

Teaching Assistant, Literature & Creative Writing Fall 2015, present
English Department, University of Kentucky

Graduate Teaching Assistant, Composition 2013-2019
Writing, Rhetoric, and Digital Studies Department, University of Kentucky

Graduate Teaching Assistant, Literature 2017-2019
English Department, University of Kentucky

Writing Program Administration Teaching Mentor May 2014-May 2015
Writing, Rhetoric, and Digital Studies Department, University of Kentucky

Part-Time Instructor of English Sept.-Dec. 2001
English Department, Hanover College

Graduate Instructor, Rhetoric and Composition Aug. 1999-May 2001
Rhetoric Department, The University of Iowa

PROFESSIONAL PUBLICATIONS

Fiction

Waxwing: "Where Did All The Older Women Go?" October 2019
Boneyard: A Flash Horror Issue (X-R-A-Y Literary Magazine): "The Horses, The Horses" October 2019
Atticus Review: "Yell Louder" September 2019
Passages North: "Margo. Turn Left." September 2019
CRAFT Literary: "What Your Mother Thinks While Making The Bed" August 2019
Pithead Chapel: "After the Wal-Mart Closes in Your Hometown" June 2019
Paper Darts, Volume 8: "Break Maidens" March 2019
Longleaf Review: "In The New World" March 2019
Collective Unrest: "Jason Can't Take a Joke" March 2019
Jellyfish Review: "In the In-Between" March 2019
X-R-A-Y Literary Magazine: "Lily in the Light" January 2019
The Ginger Collect: "Laurie In the Closet/Michael With the Knife" October 2018
Coffin Bell Journal: "The Woman in the Refrigerator" October 2018
SmokeLong Quarterly: "We All Know About Margo" September 2018
Brain, Child Magazine: "The Big Bang" December 2017
Miracle Monacle: "Everything is Breakable" April 2017

Nonfiction (Reportage, Essays, Reviews, Interviews, and Commentary)

*Dear Quarantine Diary: "*This isn't what I thought a pandemic would look like" (CNF) April 2020
Rhythm & Bones Lit: "When You Say His Name" (essay) November 2019
Gay Magazine: "The Settle Point" (essay) October 2019
SmokeLong Quarterly: interview with Leslie Walker Trahan September 2019
Pidgeonholes: "Definitions of Quiet That Didn't Make It Into My Dissertation" (essay) May 2019
Brevity: "Whenever Men Think I'm Smiling" (essay) May 2019
Hobart: "Ten Rules for Cooks on the Verge of Collapse" (essay) February 2019
TommyDeanWriter.com: Mini-interview with Megan Pillow Davis January 2019
SmokeLong Quarterly: interview with Kaitlyn Andrews-Rice December 2018
Moonchild Magazine: "When Alice Shares an Article About Earthquakes Along the New Madrid Fault" (essay) October 2018
Longreads: Editor's Pick/Highlighted essay, "Horror Lives In The Body" October 2018
Electric Literature: "Horror Lives In The Body" (essay) October 2018
SmokeLong Quarterly: Interview on "We All Know About Margo" September 2018
Memoir Mixtapes: "On Hearing Liz Phair's 'Flower' For the First Time" (essay) September 2018
Mutha Magazine: "Eggs Five Ways" (essay) September 2018
Huffington Post: "Love, Loss, and a Surprise Diagnosis: What I Learned From the Birth of My Son" (essay) April 2013
The Christian Century: "*Held in the Light: Norman Morrison's Sacrifice for Peace and His Family's Journey of Healing*," (review) January 2009
Huffington Post: "Vote Your Bible, Not Your Wallet: Dispatch from North Carolina" (commentary) December 2008
Huffington Post: "The Gloves Are Off: Palin's Speech Makes Her Fair Game" (commentary) October 2008
Huffington Post: "Iowa's Open Access Policy Is Nothing But a Trojan Horse" (reportage/commentary) March 2008
Huffington Post: "Allen's Argument Isn't 'Vintage,' It's Just Old" (commentary) March 2008
Huffington Post: "The Latest Discussion on the Future of Fuel: Where Were You, Mainstream Media?" (reportage/commentary) August 2007
Huffington Post: "Should Al Jazeera English Come to America?" (commentary) November 2006
Huffington Post: "Live From Reykjavik: An Insider's Look at Iceland Airwaves 2006" (three-part series reportage/commentary) October 2006
Huffington Post: "Who Cares About Jill Carroll? Brangelina's Having a Baby" (commentary) January 2006
Huffington Post: "A Letter to Yoko Ono on the 25th Anniversary of Her Husband's Death" (essay) December 2005
Huffington Post: "Dumping Miller Won't Save the Times" (reportage/commentary) November 2005
Huffington Post: "Judith Miller and the War in Iraq: A Case for October 2005

Evolution" (reportage/commentary)
Huffington Post: "The Fate of Gotham" October 2005
(commentary)

Poetry

The Cabinet of Heed: "St. Louis is Everywhere" September 2018
Still: The Journal: "Three Days After" June 2017
Solidago Journal: "At the Door" November 2016
The King Library Press: "Lexington, July," 25 hand-printed April 2016
broadside run

SCHOLASTIC AND PROFESSIONAL HONORS

"Best of 2019" selection for "The Settle Point" essay by *Gay* December 2019
Magazine
Pushcart Prize nomination for "When You Say His Name" December 2019
Rhythm & Bones Lit
Pushcart Prize nomination for "Whenever Men Think I'm Smiling" December 2019
Brevity
The Best American Essays 2019 notable essay selection for "Horror
Lives In The Body," *Electric Literature* October 2019
Best of the Net nomination for "Jason Can't Take A Joke" September 2019
Collective Unrest
Wigleaf Top 50 for "We All Know About Margo" May 2019
Best Small Fictions nomination for "We All Know About Margo" January 2019
SmokeLong Quarterly
Best Small Fictions nomination for "The Woman in the Refrigerator" December 2018
Coffin Bell Journal
Pushcart Prize nomination for "We All Know About Margo" December 2018
Smokelong Quarterly
Grand Prize Winner, Halloween Contest 2018 October 2018
The Ginger Collect
Pushcart Prize nomination for "The Woman In the Refrigerator" October 2018
Coffin Bell Journal
The Baltic Writing Residency: Kentucky Writers Fellowship finalist August 2018
Writing Residency Summer 2018
Ragdale Foundation, Lake Forest, Illinois
Dissertation Fellowship Spring 2018
English Department, University of Kentucky
Semifinalist for publication September 2017
YesYes Books Fiction Open Reading Period
2017-2018 Writing Fellow August 2017
Pen Parentis, New York, New York
Parent Writer Fellowship, second place winner July 2016

The Martha's Vineyard Institute of Creative Writing
Summer Research Fellowship May-August 2016
English Department, University of Kentucky
The Jean G. Pival Outstanding Writing Teaching Assistant Award May 2016
Writing, Rhetoric, and Digital Studies Department, University of Kentucky
The King Library Press UK Poetry Broadside Contest graduate winner for "Lexington, July" April 2016
William J. Sowder Award for Best Graduate Student Critical Paper for "Temporality, Motherhood, and Nation Formation in Lydia Maria Child's *Hobomok*" May 2015